

Snohomish
County

November 2020

**Disaster
Recovery
Framework**

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Forward

On March 22, 2014, Snohomish County experienced the deadliest most complex disaster in the history of the county. The SR 530 Flooding and Mudslide (SR 530 Slide) incident dramatically changed the recovery concept of the county. 43 lives were lost, 35 homes destroyed, and impacts from flooding altered the terrain.

Prior to the SR 530 Slide, Snohomish County had initiated a conscious planning effort for recovery from a catastrophic disaster. This incident clearly identified the need for jurisdictions to plan for a “focused” and catastrophic disaster recovery. The situation also highlighted the value of a flexible recovery “framework” rather than a plan.

The Snohomish County Disaster Recovery Framework (Framework) is very much informed by experienced gained in recovery from the SR 530 Slide incident, incorporating lessons learned, best practices, and recommendations for a flexible, scalable recovery process from a local or regional, focused or catastrophic disaster.

The Framework establishes a purposeful approach to enhance the County’s ability to manage recovery from disasters. Its purpose is to foster a timely recovery and efficient transition to the new normal of post disaster life.

This document applies to recovery activities coordinated by Snohomish County and covers unincorporated Snohomish County and jurisdictions and businesses opting to participate in a Snohomish County led recovery effort.

Significant changes will be made to recovery efforts from lessons born out of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Those lessons will be captured in future updates to the recovery framework after appropriate after-action reports have been developed.

Record of Revision

Change Number	Date Entered	Content of Change	Initials
N/A	2016	Creation of Framework	HBK
	2020	Entire Document Update/major changes as part of cyclical review of Annex	JHH

I. Overview

Purpose

The purpose of the Snohomish County Disaster Recovery Framework (Framework) is to provide a guide to assist Snohomish County Government in achieving a focused, timely, and expeditious recovery from a disaster.

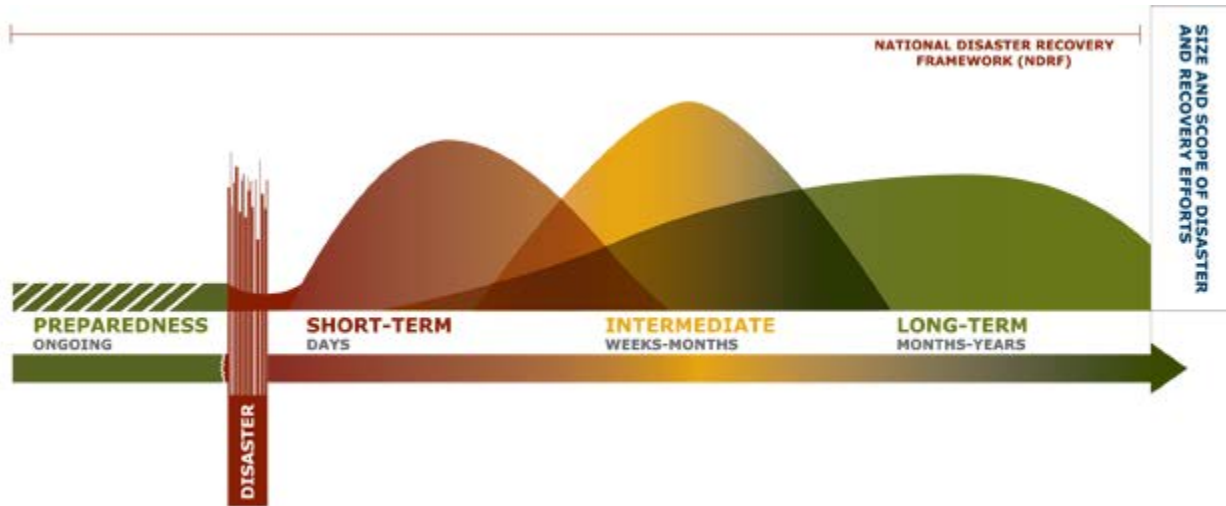


Figure 1 Recovery Timeline

Situation

Snohomish County covers 2,090 square miles of varied topography ranging from saltwater beaches, rolling hills and rich river bottom farmlands in the west, to dense forest and alpine wilderness in the mountainous east. 68% of land in the county is forest land, 18% is rural, 9% is urban/city and 5% is agricultural. The unincorporated population estimate is 312,500 and the incorporated (city) population estimate is 418,000.

- Snohomish County is vulnerable to natural hazards and human caused disasters.
- The Snohomish County Hazard Mitigation Plan (SC-HMP) is published separately and provides additional information on the potential natural and human caused disasters.

Scope

This Framework is used for disasters that impact Snohomish County.

This Framework asserts that local and catastrophic disasters will require a coordinated approach to recovery.

This Framework does not address detailed FEMA Individual Assistance (IA) or Public Assistance (PA) programs as the focus is overall recovery, not personal or government financial support options.

This Framework offers two primary options for coordination of recovery based on the incident size and impacts, as the incident will dictate the level of recovery support required.

Recovery has phases that guide the priorities of efforts, those phases include both short-term (days to weeks) for actions designed to stabilize a situation and long-term (months to years) for actions designed to establish the new normal post disaster.

Limitations

Snohomish County Government is committed to making every reasonable effort to quickly recover from a disaster.

However, County resources and systems may be overwhelmed or inoperable for an unknown and possibly significant matter of time.

There is no guarantee implied by this Framework that a full recovery from a disaster will be practical or possible.

Assumptions

Planning assumptions that are applicable to all recovery situations include but are not limited to:

- Recovery takes time, often a very long time.
- Depending on the incident, size, and impacts recovery to the pre-incident conditions may not be realistic, possible, or desirable.
- The ability to efficiently coordinate and support recovery efforts is critical to the success of recovery.
- The recovery structure must be flexible and scalable as recovery evolves as time passes.
- A new reality, in some form, will emerge.
- The focus/priorities of recovery change over time.
- Not all Recovery Support Functions or positions are required for all recovery efforts.
- Recovery activities related to land use add a layer of additional complexity, time, and cost.
- It will be a challenge to maintain continuity of institutional knowledge as recovery staff changes over the long duration of activities.
- The engagement and/or support of the directly impacted community as well as the broader community will be critical to a successful recovery.
- Past disasters have shown the depth of community involvement will be in direct relation to the recovery priorities and extent of human impact caused by the disaster.
- Geological, hydrological, or other physical factors of a disaster area may make the concept of rebuilding too costly, risky, or otherwise unfeasible.
- Recovery involves interdependences and priorities that will guide the development of recovery activities and the pathway forward.
- Communication with the affected survivors, residents, and community is critical to build trust and support in the recovery process.
- Funding recovery will be costly.
- Areas will be impacted differently and require different recovery strategies/efforts.
- Ultimately jurisdictional authority will make critical decisions.
- Input from the affected residents, survivors, and/or greater community may be gathered but may not be applicable to all areas of recovery.
- Recovery efforts will include resilient and sustainable aspects whenever realistic or possible.

- Recovery activities will occur both concurrently and at different rates, which will create challenges for meeting resource needs.
- Recovery is a scalable process, which will scale up as needs for resources are identified.
- Some individuals or groups will be able to recover on their own, and some individuals or groups will need assistance to recover.
- A disaster will have financial/economic consequences that impact the recovery process.
- Damage to critical infrastructure/key resources, vital systems, and essential functions caused by a disaster will impact the recovery process.
- Community members will be adversely impacted by a disaster (e.g., loss of income from work, damage to home/rental property, temporary or permanent displacement).
- Considerations will be made for people with disabilities and others with access and functional needs.
- Impacted communities and community members, including individuals, voluntary, nonprofit, and faith-based organizations, and businesses, will guide the recovery process and strategies for recovery.
- Voluntary, nonprofit, and faith-based organizations, as well as private organizations, will be essential to successful recovery operations.

Disaster Recovery Process



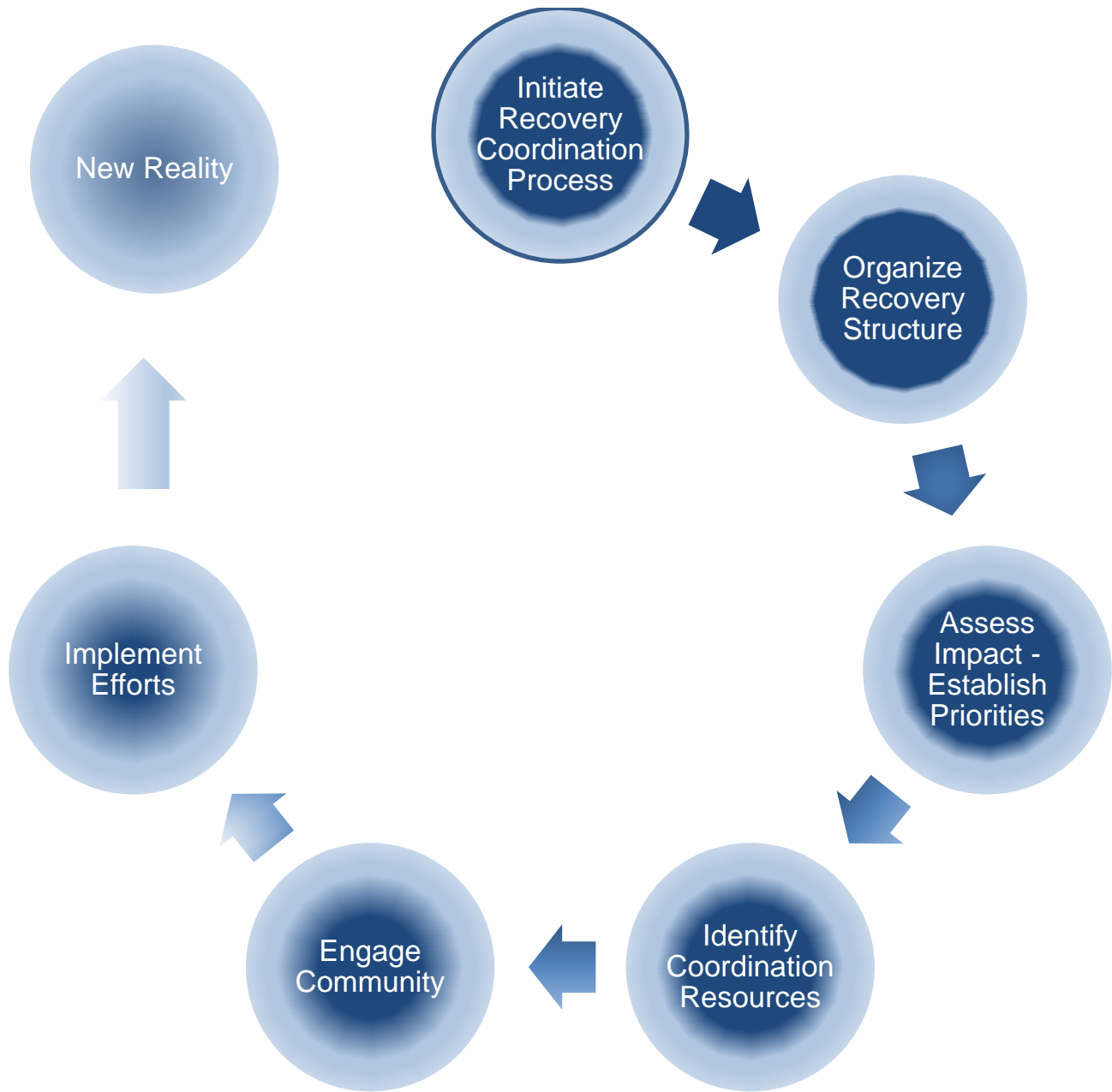


Figure 2 Disaster Recovery Process

Disaster recovery management engages the community, those directly affected and the larger area, through coordination and planning as part of the recovery process.

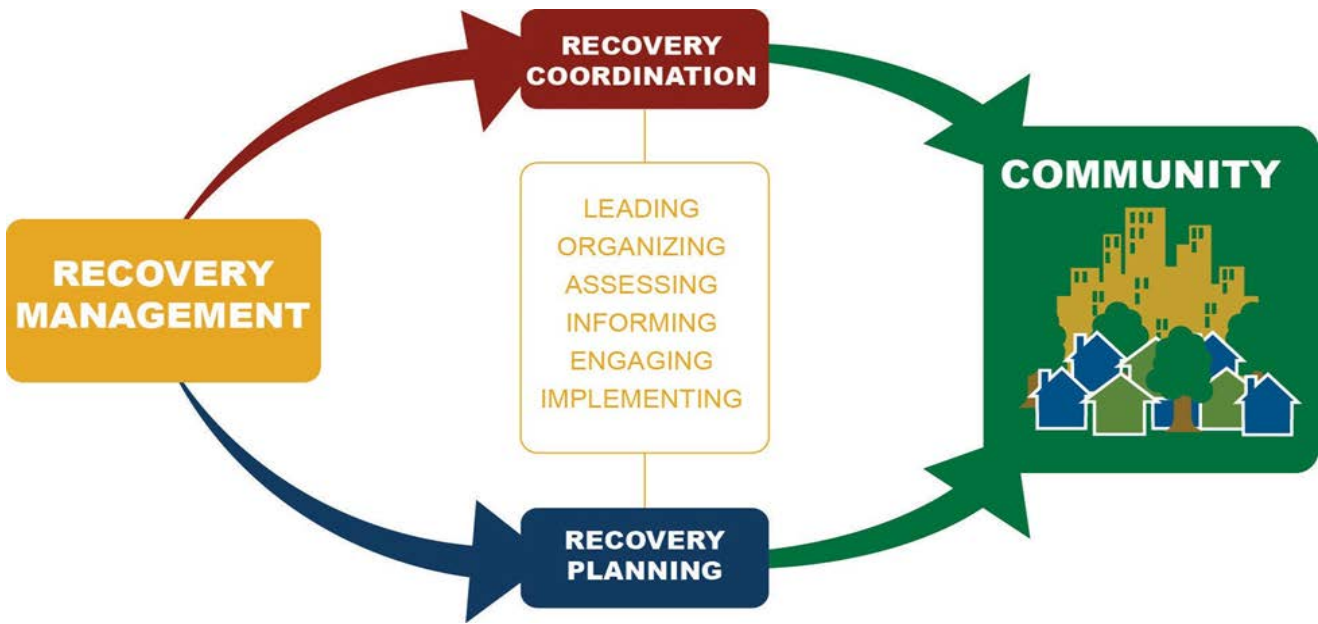


Figure 3 Disaster Recovery Community Engagement

Recovery Structure

This Framework offers two primary options for recovery based on the incident size and impacts, however as noted previously, the incident will dictate the level of recovery support required.

Authority will be given to recovery leadership by the County Executive. Formally assigning authority will enable various stakeholders to work together in a complex and dynamic environment.

Recovery Team (RT) is identified as a team of Snohomish County employees and/or regional partners identified to support, manage, facilitate, or lead recovery in addition to their regular work. This team may have one or two key staff “reassigned” to support recovery full time, but typically does not require hiring of new staff at the team level. See Figure 4 Snohomish County Disaster Recovery Team Overview.

Disaster Recovery Team Overview

Recovery Support Function	Disaster Recovery Position	Lead Snohomish County Department	Primary Focus
Community Planning	RSF Leader	Planning and Development Services	Land use, permitting, zoning
Economic	RSF Leader	Trade and Economic Development	Assessment, (re)development, tourism,
Health	RSF Leader	Snohomish County Health District	Healthcare system, EMS, environmental assessment/risk/guidance
Human Services	RSF Leader	Human Services	Mental Health, housing, unmet needs, social systems, advocacy, personal property, coordination of VOADS
Infrastructure	RSF Leader	Public Works	Utilities (public and private), Roadways/bridges, debris
Natural Cultural	RSF Leader	Parks and Recreation	Environment – trails, rivers, parks, historical sites, memorial
Support	Coordinator	Executive Office	Legal, financial, communications, community connection, technical experts (assessor)
Critical Partners	Representative	N/A	Federal, State, municipal, tribal, business, NGO liaison and coordination of efforts

Figure 4 Snohomish County Disaster Recovery Team Overview

Sno Co DRF - Long Term Recovery Team Basic Structure – July 2016

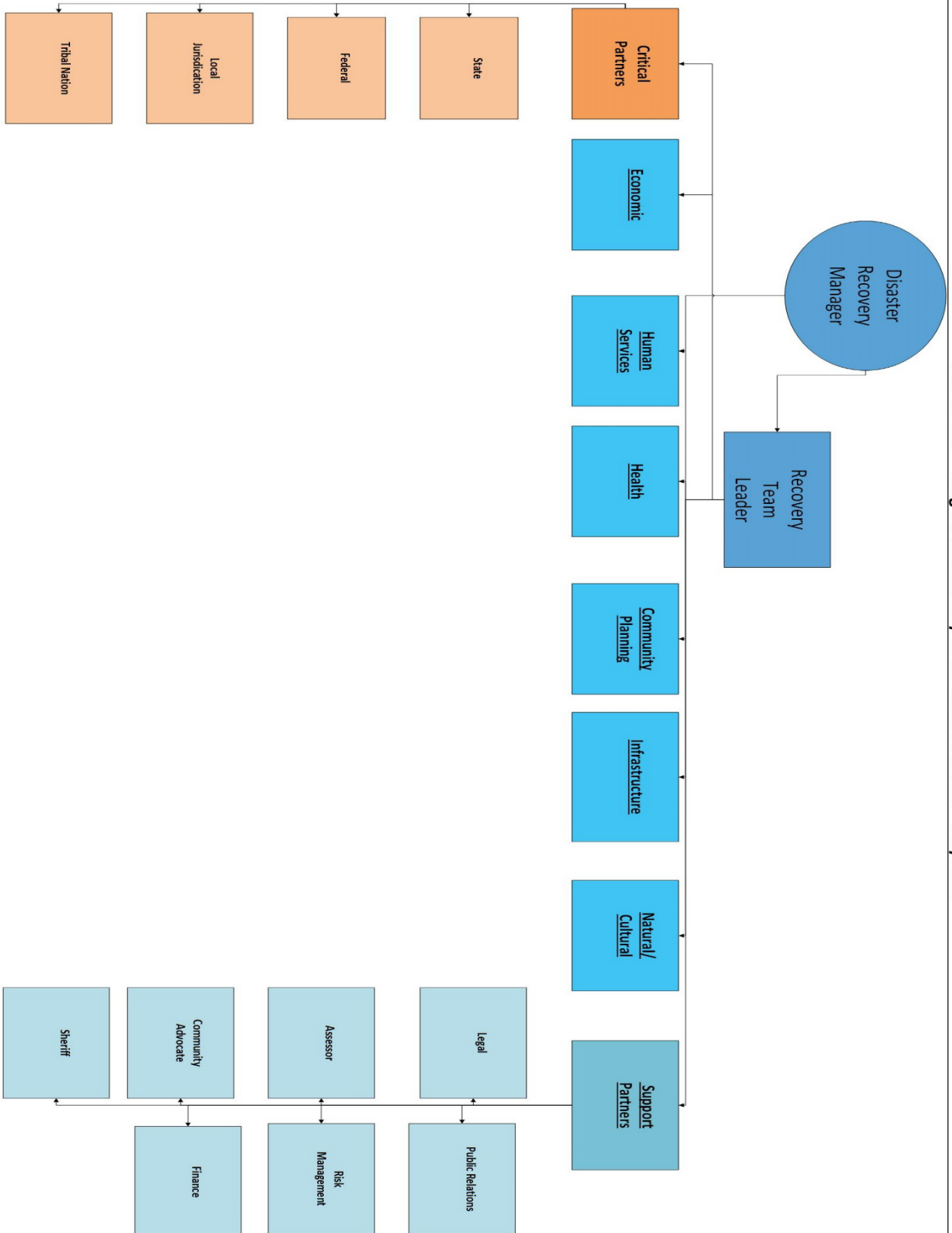


Figure 5 Snohomish County Disaster Recovery Team Basic Structure

II. Roles and Responsibilities

Snohomish County

Leadership

County Executive

Will provide elected official coordination and request support/funding from local, state, and federal representatives, guide overall recovery policy direction, and appoint/designate the Local Disaster Recovery Manager (DRM).

County Council

Will provide policy approval for funding support/allocation, approve appropriate motions, ordinances, or other required legislation to facilitate long-term recovery, and serve as recovery advocates with local, state and federal elected leaders.

Separately Elected Officials (Sheriff, PAO, etc.)

Will support the recovery efforts through the allocation of staff and resources as requested and able.

Disaster Recovery Team/Office

All members of the recovery effort have the responsibility to keep the Disaster Recovery Manager (DRM) advised of their actions, facilitate recovery work, communicate with staff and the public, track and document all costs, and engage recovery partners to accomplish efforts. See appendix for detailed position specific information

Disaster Recovery Manager (DRM)

Will lead recovery, represent county leadership in the community, and provide policy direction to the Recovery Team/Office of Recovery.

Recovery Team Leader (RTL)

Will coordinate the recovery team including information sharing, documentation, meeting facilitation, community outreach, stakeholder engagement, and other tasks as directed by the DRM.

Recovery Support Function (RSF) Leader

Will facilitate planning and tasks associated with their specific/authoritative area of recovery. It is recommended that each RSF have a primary and alternate lead identified.

RSF Support agencies/partners

Will participate in recovery planning and tasks as appropriate to the recovery priorities and their operational authority when requested by the DRM, RTL, or RSF Leader

County Departments

All Snohomish County Departments will support recovery as requested by the DRM and/or County Executive with resources including but not limited to staff, facilities, and/or funding.

Federal Government

The Federal Government has a role of supporting local jurisdictions through the recovery process by providing technical assistance, facilitating access to federal agencies/resources, and supporting HMGP, IA and PA programs.

See the National Disaster Recovery Framework (NDRF), July 2013 for details.

State Government

The State of Washington has a role of supporting local jurisdictions through the recovery process by providing technical assistance, facilitating access to State agencies/resources, supporting HMGP, IA and PA programs, and requesting Federal support on behalf of Snohomish County Government.

See the Washington State Disaster Restoration Framework 2014 for details.

Tribes

Snohomish County recognizes there are unique aspects of recovery in relation to tribal priorities and needs. In addition tribal interests expand beyond the borders of tribal land; therefore Tribes will be invited to participate in recovery as part of the Critical Partners division of the Recovery Team/Office.

If the disaster occurs on tribal land, the county will support the tribal recovery efforts as able and requested by Tribal leaders.

Municipal Government

Washington State home rule provides the mechanism for local jurisdictions to request and facilitate emergency efforts directly with the state however it has been proven most effective to coordinate efforts at a county level. This concept will carry through into recovery resulting in the invitation to impacted local jurisdictions to be part of the Critical Partners division of the Recovery Team/Office.

If the disaster is limited to one local jurisdiction, the county will support the local government recovery efforts as able and when requested by the local leadership.

Other Agencies

Nongovernmental (NGO), faith based, volunteer organizations, private sector stakeholders, and regional development organizations such as Snohomish County Tomorrow and Puget Sound Regional Council will support recovery through participation at the Recovery Team or Office of Recovery level as appropriate to their role in recovery. Support may include personnel, funding, and/or other resources as requested by a RSF Leader.

County Residents

Snohomish County promotes personal preparedness to all residents in the county. The concept of preparing to respond to and recover from a personal, local, or regional disaster is socialized through numerous programs. The expectations is that the public will know their risks, mitigate them if possible, be prepared to respond as able, and have a personal plan for recovery should they be directly affected by an incident. Personal long-term recovery plans should include emotional, social, financial, legal, and liability considerations.

Residents may also be engaged in the recovery process through community outreach opportunities specific to a project or the overall recovery. When possible and appropriate, community members will be invited to participate in recovery projects as contractors, personnel, advisors, and/or supporters.

III. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

General

Recovery is a purposeful process that takes weeks to years to complete and establish the post disaster normal.

The concept for recovery in Snohomish County is to have a Recovery Team (RT) or Office of Recovery (OOR) established shortly after the disaster occurs to coordinate recovery efforts and/or projects as directed by the Disaster Recovery Manager acting under the authority of the County Executive.

Recovery must be taken into consideration during the initial response to a disaster occurs and implemented as soon as resources allow, typically the initial phase is simultaneous with response efforts. Being familiar with recovery priorities may help guide and direct the response to the disaster and expedite recovery actions.

The RT or OOR will assess the disaster situation, identify recovery priorities and resource needs, and establish a strategy for meeting the goal of recovery for a specific incident.

The recovery group will meet regularly to ensure a coordinated efficient recovery process.

Disasters dictate the timeline of activities. The response phase can last a few hours to days, depending on the size and complexity of the incident. The recovery phase will typically last weeks to years or even decades depending on the size, complexity, and impacts of the incident.

This RSF defines the roles of government, private sector and non-governmental organizations in promoting recovery. Its intent is to reinforce the principle that short- and long-term recovery activities quickly emerge from initial response operations.

Triggers

Actions to promote short-term and long-term recovery should commence concurrently with response operations if possible. In any event, steps to promote recovery shall commence as soon as life-saving efforts are completed. In the wake of a disaster or emergency ECC leadership will set priorities for recovery of critical functions, services, vital resources, facilities, programs and infrastructure. Evaluation of the incident's impact on the public occurs throughout the response phase and influences the direction of recovery operations related to individuals and businesses.

Damage assessment activities begin in the response phase and are intended to support functions such as mapping locations of damaged property and the subsequent application for federal disaster assistance funds. (

The concept of a recovery should be addressed within hours of initial response. The discussion needs to include consideration for economic, social, emotional, and environmental impacts to the disaster community(ies).

Recovery can be described in three phases:

INITIAL – typically involving immediate actions such as restoration of life saving and sustaining critical infrastructure including vital resources, critical services, and critical functions, and life-saving and sustaining assistance programs.

SHORT-TERM – typically involving actions that are intended to stabilize a situation while long-term recovery projects are established.

Short-term recovery begins early in the response phase and is focused on restoring critical services and infrastructure such as utilities, government operations, medical services, transportation routes, cleanup, debris removal, abatement of dangerous buildings and providing support to residents and businesses.

The ECC and the Joint information Center (JIC), will disseminate information about the government recovery efforts including applicable federal disaster assistance registration processes and about specific local, state, and federal programs for residents and small businesses (Individual Assistance). Damage assessment will occur to conduct safety evaluations of structures and tag them as required using ATC-20, ATC-45 or other relevant damage evaluation standards.

LONG-TERM – typically projects that lead to restoration, rebuilding, and/or development of capabilities in the disaster area ensuring applicable mitigation projects and programs are considered and implemented when feasible.

Many of the processes included in Short-Term Recovery continue under Long-Term Recovery, albeit with different priorities and emphasis. For example, emergency road repairs made during or immediately after the response phase might suffice for a time, but will ultimately need to be brought up to normal road standards during the Long-Term Recovery phase.

The Hazard Mitigation Steering Committee, comprised of representatives from several Pierce County agencies, will document activities to reduce future impacts in the disaster zone.

Long-Term Recovery is focused in a larger sense on establishing a continued path forward. Components include rebuilding public infrastructure, ensuring adequate housing stock, coordinating delivery of social and health care including mental health services, refined land-use planning to include mitigation goals and lessons learned from the disaster, support for business to help the economy rebound and maximal utilization of federal and state aid to recover disaster costs.

Because long-term recovery is a partnership among all segments of the community, the County Executive who will be involved in this process in partnership with the cities and towns, the private-sector and non-governmental organizations to begin work on recovery priorities.

All disasters will require some form of recovery, the recovery activities are directly correlated to the impacts of the incident. Thus, anytime the Emergency Coordination Center is activated the need for a formal recovery effort, including staff and projects, needs to be considered. The

incident specifics will identify the need to use the Framework to guide recovery.

Recovery Activities

The incident will dictate the specific recovery activities required for a purposeful long-term recovery however there are some activities that will occur with all recovery efforts regardless of size and scope.

Assessment

- A thorough impact assessment is important to understand where capability exists and where recovery resource support is required. Only RSF's and positions that are directly supporting a recovery priority will activate, to minimize unnecessary use of limited resources.
- Each RSF will identify:
 - the incident impacts to their capability
 - prioritized recovery goals specific to the RSF
 - the tasks, resources, and policy decisions/actions required to achieve the goals
 - the participants and/or dependencies with internal and external agencies required to reach the RSF goals
- The assessment is a rapid process designed to quickly consolidate data for coordination across RSFs and to guide the establishment of overall recovery priorities for leadership approval.

See appendix Recovery Assessment template

Strategy

- Based on the findings of the impact assessment a documented recovery strategy supporting achievement of priorities and goals will be developed.
- The strategy will be a fluid concept with the flexibility to meet the challenges and adjustments that are expected during recovery.

See appendix Recovery Strategy template

Community Engagement

- The community should be engaged through a variety of methods including but not limited to:
 - face to face meetings
 - written correspondence i.e.: letters, email, or bulletins
 - social media i.e.: Facebook, Twitter, or blogs
 - input forums (electronic and in person)
 - other methods as identified as meeting the needs of the community.
- Engagement should be initiated as soon as possible and continue throughout the recovery process.

Meetings/coordination

- The recovery team or office must meet, whenever possible, on a regular basis as consistent with recovery priority demands. Regular dedicated recovery meetings are critical to coordination, information sharing, and direction on priorities and expectations. The meetings serve as the venue for identification of dependencies and at times resolution of competing priorities.

Support

- The RT/OOR will require resources to complete the goals identified in the impact assessment.

- Resources include items that are part of everyday operations such as computers and phones, as well as specialty items such as plotters, safety equipment, or cameras.
- The most critical resource to the recovery team will be that which supports the emotional/mental health of the team. Focusing on a disaster for a long period of time has affects that are not always seen, particularly ones that involve fatalities. The need for ongoing emotional care will be critical to the RT/OOR staff.

Tracking/reporting

- All recovery activities must be documented, tracked, and status reports will occur on a regular basis.
- Regular status reports to elected leaders should be provided to ensure progress towards recovery priorities and goals is occurring.

Financial tracking/reimbursement

- Tracking the cost of recovery is key to understanding the financial impacts and in planning for potential future recovery needs from the current or new disaster situations.

Close out

- Capturing the lessons learned, best practices, and development of plans based on recovery efforts is critical to the ability to improve and build capability for future disasters.
- Each RSF and support agency will write a short debrief document explaining what they contributed to the recovery, tasks accomplished, critical milestone of recovery, and advice to future efforts.

Communication

The incident will dictate the communications approach however, regular consistent messaging from the recovery leadership to partners, survivors, and the broader community is critical to a well received and successful recovery. Communications should be a mix of in person sessions, email, press release/interviews, and social media posting. This combination will reach the greatest number of interested parties.

There should be a tiered approach to information distribution starting with the most affected persons followed by the least affected and eventually the general public.

Each recovery project should have a specific communication plan outlining how the (groups) will be engaged and who from the team/office will speak for the topic.

See Appendix Project Communication Template

Funding

Funding for long-term recovery is not as clearly defined as for response and short-term recovery efforts therefore Snohomish County will need to plan for potential recovery costs including matches to grants prior to a disaster. Some points to consider when developing a funding strategy prior to or during long-term recovery efforts include the following:

- County department budgets will have to support recovery efforts either partially or completely.
- Not all recovery efforts will be reimbursed (FEMA)
- Donation of funding is often expected to be used for the community so use in county recovery will be limited to specific projects for example a victim's memorial.

- Grants will take time to apply for and obtain funding and often have very specific compliance requirements limiting some flexibility of use.
- Staff will be reassigned to support recovery requiring adjustments of pre-incident work plans.
- Capital projects will be necessary (tax dollars)
- The size and impact of the disaster will directly correlate with the available funding. County departments will be forced to use established budgets to support aspects of recovery, some of which may be reimbursed through disaster funding, but not all. Much of this will be in the use of staff time.
- Not all recovery efforts/projects are reimbursable.
- Capital projects will be necessary. Existing ones may be postponed, cancelled, or otherwise adjusted based on the incident.
- Community donations are typically used for public support and not to fund county efforts. (United way, disaster relief funds)
- During recovery an open mind to funding options is key. Grants take time to apply for and be allocated.
- Regardless of whether Snohomish County is granted a Presidential Declaration under the Stafford Act, a number of Federal agencies such as the U.S Small Business Administration, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development maintain programs that can directly support the needs of impacted communities

Possible sources for recovery funding are listed below including the lead agency and information about county match requirements. Contact a specific agency for details of possible funding options.

- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)-
 - Coordinated through State Emergency Management
 - Public Assistance (PA) Match up to 25% (typically split 50/50 with state)
 - Individual Assistance (IA) for persons affected by the disaster
- US Housing and Urban Development (HUD) –
 - Coordinated directly with local jurisdiction
 - Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)
 - CDBG-Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR)
- US Economic Development Administration (EDA)
 - Coordinated directly with local jurisdiction
 - Local match up to 25%
- US Department of Labor
 - NEG- National Emergency Grant – no match
- WA State Department of Commerce
- Reallocation of State or Federal appropriations
- Various State or Federal grants – www.grants.gov
- Snohomish County “rainy day or contingency fund”- if one exists at the time of the disaster
- Foundations
 - Gates, Rockefeller (ID local ones – Cascade Valley Hospital)
- Non-Profits
 - United Way, Red Cross, faith-based
- Associations
 - Recreation (river rafters, hikers)

- Private individuals

VII. ADMINISTRATION

Administration

This Framework will be reviewed for updates or revisions at least annually and/or after each use of the document.

County staff will be provided a review of the recovery roles and responsibilities section at least every year, with the recommendation for a recovery focused exercise at least every two years.

Training may consist of a seminar, workshop, or independent study.

Exercises should be conducted at a Table Top or Functional level and can in coordination with a response exercise but should focus clearly and directly on recovery activities.

IX. REFERENCES/RESOURCES

References

- DHS/FEMA National Disaster Recovery Framework 2011
- DHS/FEMA Long-Term Community Recovery Planning Process: A Self-Help Guide 2005
- DHS/FEMA Effective Coordination of Recovery Resources for State, Tribal, Territorial and Local Incidents Draft January 2015
- DHS/FEMA National Mitigation Framework 2013
- Washington State Restoration Framework 2014
- Snohomish County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan 2014
- City of Seattle Disaster Recovery Plan – Draft August 2014
- LMI Disaster Recovery Positions Library – September 2014