

30 Years of Hazard Mitigation, FEMA and the State of Idaho highlight local success stories

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Each \$1 spent on mitigation can save \$6 on disaster recovery.

Boise, Idaho – For years, when heavy or even moderate rainfall happened in the City of Blackfoot, Idaho, it wasn't unusual to have chronic flooding in streets and homes. It was a problem that plagued the Bingham County town of roughly 13,000 people for years. Thanks to the federal Hazard Mitigation Grant, the city is addressing the stormwater drainage issue. The undertaking will save thousands of dollars that would otherwise be used trying to respond to such events each year.

As FEMA marks 30 years of Hazard Mitigation efforts, the project is being highlighted as a tangible success story. In the case of Blackfoot, the federal money, along with local funds will cover a \$2.6 million stormwater retrofit. The improvements will protect an estimated 960 people, 214 properties, and more than two miles of roadway and storm drain lines.

“Disaster recovery is far more expensive than mitigation,” said FEMA Regional Administrator Mike O’Hare. “In the last 30 years, FEMA has funded more than \$15 billion in projects, like the Blackfoot retrofit, saving the nation countless dollars on recovery and lessening the potential impacts on residents.”

“Our mitigation team at IOEM does an outstanding job of working with all 44 counties and the five Tribes in Idaho to make sure local entities have identified projects that could qualify for hazard mitigation grants,” said IOEM Director Brad Richy. “For many small, rural counties these matching dollars can dramatically improve the quality of life for every resident in that area.”

The purpose of the hazard mitigation program is to fund projects identified in county mitigation plans to reduce damages from future disasters. The total cost for this project was \$2,620,000. The funding is normally 75% federal and 25% non-



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federal split; however, the City of Blackfoot contributed a larger local match share in order to cover more areas for stormwater improvements.

A 2016 Storm Water System Assessment identified areas in the city of Blackfoot with inadequate capacity and bottlenecks. This project increased the capacity of approximately 2,200 feet of a storm drainage line from a 12-inch pipe to a 48-inch pipe stormwater drainage system.

The City of Blackfoot's project qualified for funding under Section 404 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act which provides grants to states, tribes, local governments, and certain private non-profits to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to people and property from future disasters. The Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) supports cost-effective post-disaster projects and is the longest running mitigation program among FEMA's three grant programs.

More information about FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Assistance Program can be found at www.fema.gov/hazard-mitigation-assistance. Information about Idaho disaster recovery is available at ioem.idaho.gov/Pages/Operations/DisasterAssistance.aspx.

Graphic stack of money and plus sign showing: Every \$1 spent on Mitigation saves \$6 on future

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