MITIGATION Minute

SEPTEMBER 2026

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West Glendive Levee Project Advances

The City of Glendive and Dawson County are advancing a proposed flood-risk-reduction project for West Glendive along the Yellowstone River. The West Glendive Levee Improvement Project would raise the existing levee by approximately 3 to 3.5 feet and extend portions of the structure to roughly three miles with the objective of providing protection equivalent to the 1-percent-annual-chance flood while reducing the community's exposure to river flooding and winter ice-jam events.

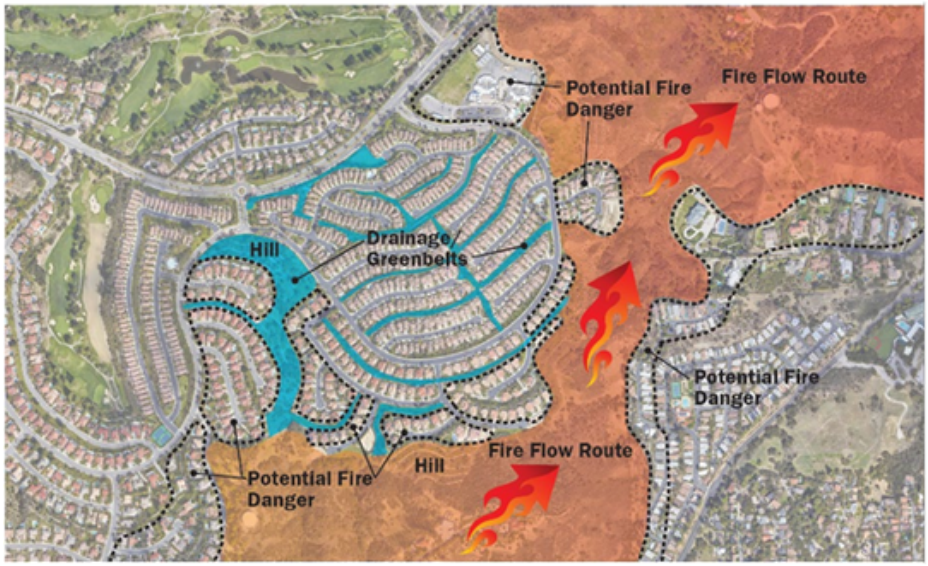
The existing levee was constructed in 1954 and was later determined not to meet FEMA certification requirements. As a result, areas behind the levee remain subject to mapped floodplain regulations. The affected area includes an estimated 178 homes and 50 businesses, including key commercial services.

Glendive has worked with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Montana DNRC, and engineering partners since 2020 to examine alternatives. Through a federal Section 205 flood-control study, the Corps identified the levee raise and extension as the recommended option.

If constructed and subsequently recognized through FEMA's applicable levee-accreditation and map-revision processes, the project could support removal of protected properties from the mapped Special Flood Hazard Area. That outcome could lower long-term flood exposure, reduce regulatory barriers to reinvestment, and help West Glendive plan for future development more confidently. The project demonstrates a core mitigation principle: investments made before a disaster can protect residents, infrastructure, local businesses, and community services for decades.

FEMA Publishes Builder's Guide to Construction in Wildfire Zones

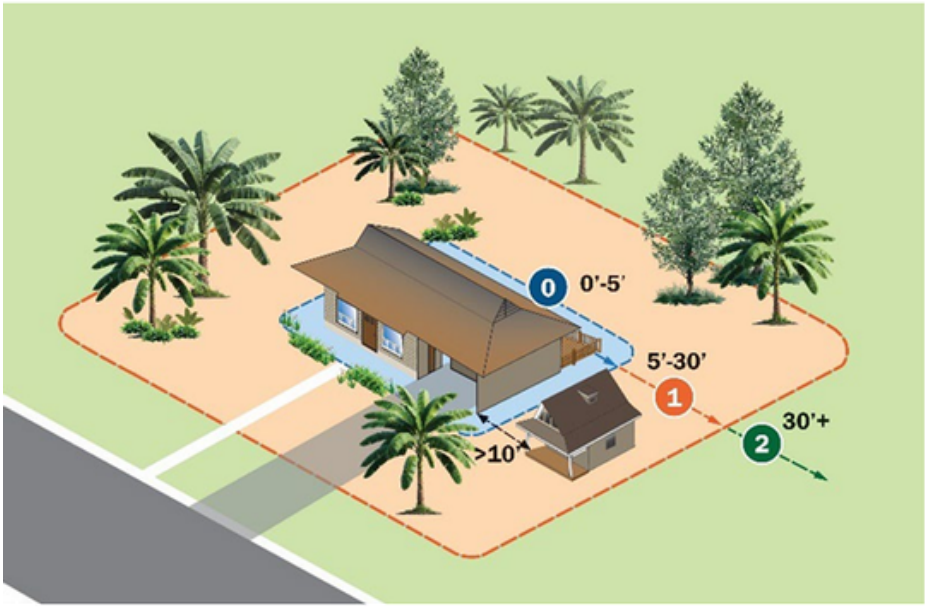
As the severity of wildfires continues to grow, so has the number of casualties, property damage and post-fire impacts such as landslides, flash floods and mudslides. Expanding development into previously undeveloped land also increases the number of ignition sources for wildfires, such as downed power lines, fireworks, or improperly disposed barbecue coals and campfires.



Drainages and greenbelts in or adjacent to communities can provide access for fire to flow into the urban/built environment.

Because of the growing need for information on building in fire-prone areas, FEMA published the the Builder's Guide to Construction in Wildfire Zones (P-737). This guide outlines best practices to reduce the vulnerability of buildings to wildfires. The focus is on new construction, but existing construction is also referenced.

This resource addresses structural hardening by providing guidance on design, material specifications and construction of new buildings, and in some cases, existing buildings. Roof construction, exterior walls, vents, windows and doors are all considered to help mitigate potential damage from wildfires. Decks, outdoor lighting and fences can increase flammability when ignited by wildfire.



Defensible space is divided into three zones based on distance from a structure.

Effective wildfire mitigation, including exposure reduction and structure hardening, is necessary to reduce risk and increase community resilience. This guide provides best practices and considerations for materials, construction and storage of flammable materials.

For more information, download a copy of the the Builder's Guide to Construction in Wildfire Zones.

MT DES Welcomes New Mitigation Coordinator



Above: Misti Dauenhauer, MT DES Mitigation Coordinator.

Misti Dauenhauer joined MT DES' team as our new Mitigation Coordinator on September 8, 2026.

Dauenhauer brings extensive experience in federal grant management, compliance monitoring, program oversight, strategic planning, fiscal accountability, stakeholder engagement, and statewide training. Most recently, she served as a State Grants Coordinator for federally funded Victims of Crime Act and Family Violence Prevention and Services Act programs with the Montana Board of Crime Control. Her background also includes leadership roles supporting statewide military programs and large, geographically dispersed teams.

We are excited to have Dauenhauer's strong program-management, relationship-building, and risk-mitigation experience supporting MT DES mitigation efforts. Please join us in welcoming her to the team!

Central Regional Plans Annual Update 2026

Time: 10:00am-2:00pm
Dates & Locations:

- 9/29/2026 Great Falls
- 9/30/2026 Havre
- 10/1/2026 Lewistown

Scan the QR or use link to register: https://forms.cloud.microsoft/g/EQ6aTWxafy?origin=lprLink

Mitigation Funding Opportunities for 2026

Funding Opportunity	Funds Available	Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)
BRIC	Contingent on 2026 NOFO	Expected Early 2027
FMA	Contingent on 2026 NOFO	Expected Early 2027

If you are interested in any open mitigation funding opportunity, please complete a NOI (Notice of Intent) located on the Mitigation Grants page on the MT DES website and submit it to the Mitigation team. Once we receive your NOI, we will reach out to you to further discuss project eligibility and the application process.

FEMA Updates the Resilience Analysis and Planning Tool (RAPT) to Improve User Experience

FEMA updated its Resilience Analysis and Planning Tool (RAPT) to include the latest data, add new preset maps, and modernize its functionality. Emergency managers, local officials, and other community leaders across the country use RAPT to better understand the risks their communities face from different types of disasters and the vulnerabilities that may impact their ability to respond to emergencies. It empowers these leaders to make more informed, strategic decisions on how to strengthen their community's resilience.

RAPT is a free, publicly available, web-based mapping application. It is designed to be easy-to-use even for people without a background in data analytics. Through RAPT, users can combine different data layers to see how various factors impact their specific community.

This year's RAPT update includes adding the most current county, census tract and tribal data as well as new imported data from the National Weather Service. The update also added three new ready-made dashboards: Disaster Declaration Dashboard, USA Storm Reports Dashboard and Infrastructure Explorer Dashboard. RAPT is accessible at www.FEMA.gov/rapt.

Bureau of Mines to Hold Earthquake Hazards Workshop

Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology will be holding the 2026 Montana Earthquake Hazards Workshop in Bozeman on October 20-21, 2026. The 2026 workshop will be hosted by Montana State University in collaboration with MSU Civil Engineering Department, shortly after the Great Montana ShakeOut. This meeting brings together various stakeholders, agencies, local partners, schools, concerned citizens, and members of the Montana Earthquake Working Group (MEWG) to ensure communities are aware of seismic risk and to facilitate risk reduction activities.

The meeting will be held in person in Room 201, Norm Asbjornson Hall, located on the MSU campus in Bozeman. There is no registration fee. Email Yann Gavillot at ygavillot@mtech.edu to register.

Training Opportunities

2026 DNRC FLOODPLAIN ANNUAL RESOURCE SEMINAR. Three-day virtual event with various workshops, offered November 17-19. Save the date. POC**:** shylea.wingard@mt.gov.

Association of State Floodplain Managers Conference. Billings. Save the date: February 26-28.

Advanced Recovery Training for Floodplain Management. This training helps communities streamline and coordinate recovery efforts after a disaster. Learn about the challenges to local resources and personnel, how to conduct substantial damage estimates (SDEs), and what resources are available to assist. To schedule a training event, contact: Traci Sears, tsears@mt.gov.

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