



Western Carolina University

Regional Emergency Planning Model for Continuous Disaster Mitigation Response



Laura Myers, lbmyers@email.wcu.edu, 828-227-3723

Prevent, Protect, Respond, Recover

Homeland Security Challenge:

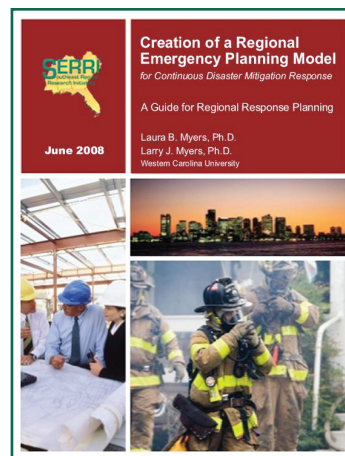
Regional disaster response efforts would permit better localized preparedness for small-scale events, as well as large-scale disasters requiring extensive resources from beyond the local boundaries. Although the regional response efforts are more effective, they are hard to develop and maintain and require the collaboration of disparate stakeholders and first responder agencies.

Research Project Solution:

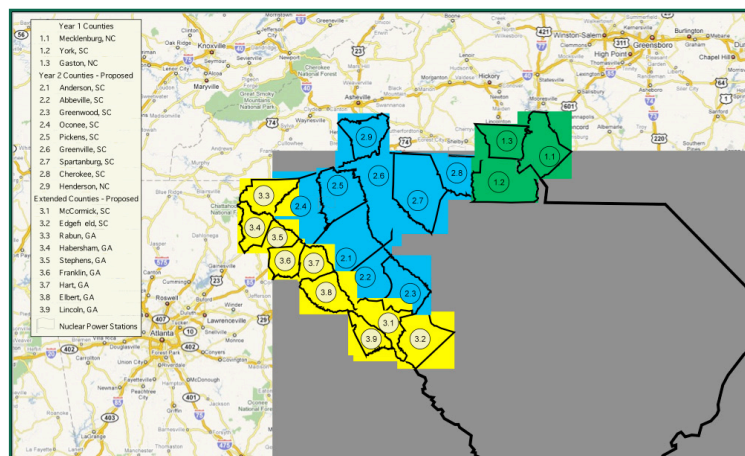
The objective of this project is to develop a customizable regional emergency planning model process. The model process is intended to be a series of collaborative workshops used to assist first responders and emergency planners in establishing annual regional planning goals and to track progress in meeting those goals. Planning goals include identifying regional response gaps, developing specialized regional response teams, and creating collaborative agency mutual aid agreements. The model process has been piloted in the Charlotte, North Carolina region. This region was chosen because Charlotte and its surrounding region have so many different types of characteristics that can be taken into account when undertaking regional action planning.

National Implications:

The model process developed in this project enhances communication between response planners, including law enforcement, fire and rescue, the business community, faith-based organizations, and emergency management. Shared communication among stakeholders representing different missions and jurisdictions lays the groundwork for more effective disaster response and mitigation planning. Regional planning benefits from the knowledge of all efforts that have been established across a region and from understanding how those efforts can be combined and enhanced to better allocate resources and provide an effective and efficient regional response to emergencies and disasters. Collaborative regional planning improves local response where regional agreements are established to support critical local events, which may be an essential need for rural areas. This process creates a forum for continuous communication that will permit the development of compliance with federal, state, and local requirements.



The REPM project has produced a manual for use by any group of response planners who intend to develop or enhance regional planning efforts. The manual documents a process for bringing together disparate planning groups across disciplines and jurisdictions to regionalize emergency planning.



The map depicts the communities participating at multiple levels in the REPM project and shows the current and projected regionalization efforts on the Interstate 85 corridor from Charlotte, NC, to Atlanta, GA.

www.serri.org

For More Information on SERRI, contact:

Warren Edwards, Director, SERRI
865-574-8277, edwardswc@ornl.gov

Ben Thomas, Operations Manager
865-574-5438, thomasbjr@ornl.gov

SERRI is managed by the Department of Energy's Oak Ridge National Laboratory for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security