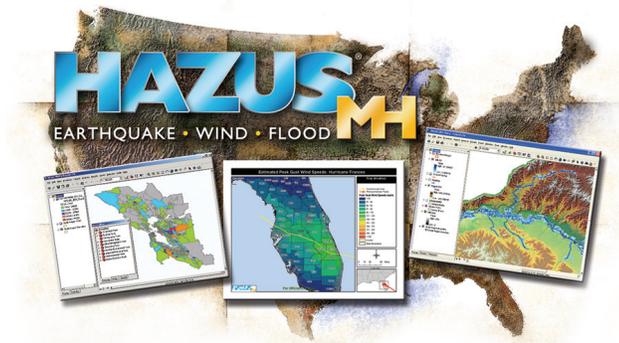


3RiversHUG

Formed by the
California University of Pennsylvania



Background

The **3RiversHUG** is a forum for southwestern Pennsylvania public, private, academic, and third sector (not-for-profit) organizations that use HAZUS software and related technologies to develop public policy and programs for building disaster-resistant communities. The initial meeting of the Steering Committee to organize the **3RiversHUG** occurred on October 20, 2005. They have had monthly meetings since then to discuss goals, mission, projects, training opportunities, and outreach strategies.

The mission of the 3RiversHUG is to offer a forum for southwestern Pennsylvania public, private, and academic organizations that use HAZUS-MH[®] software and related technologies to develop public policy and programs for building disaster-resistant communities.

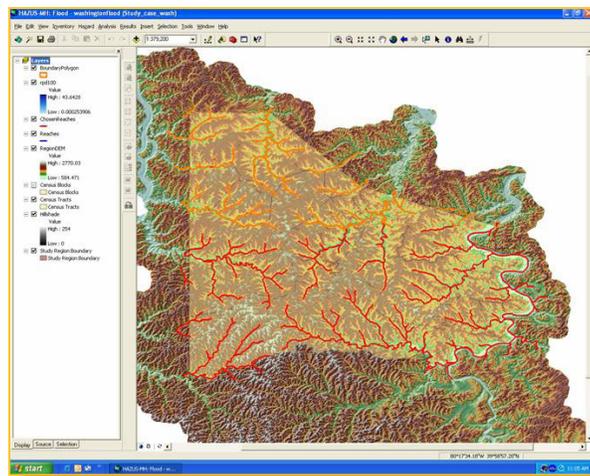
This group began as Project Leader, Dr. Jamie Mitchem, and his colleague Dr. Thomas Mueller at California University of Pennsylvania realized the need for comprehensive planning for flood mitigation activities in southwestern Pennsylvania. With backgrounds in hazards geography and GIS respectively, this project married their research and service agendas perfectly. They reached out to regional leaders in academia and the public, private, and third (not-for-profit) sectors to set up a diverse Steering Committee to lead the **3RiversHUG** so it can assist in improving flood mitigation and hazards preparedness in general in southwestern Pennsylvania using HAZUS and state-of-the-art geospatial technology.

3RiversHUG Objectives

- To advance opportunities for training in the use of *HAZUS-MH* software and technology;
- To be a resource for *hazard mitigation* information and data;
- To encourage and assist *local governments* in the establishment of hazard mitigation protocols;
- To be a conduit for *communication* among public, private and third-sector (not-for-profit) institutions for hazard mitigation efforts and best management practices.

Projects

The **3RiversHUG** is in its initial stages of implementing projects. They are running a Level 1 analysis using the HAZUS flood module for Washington County, PA, and plan to discuss the results with the Washington County Flood Taskforce with the assistance of Chris Barton, the 911 Coordinator for the county and a **3RiversHUG** member. They are also gathering data for a Level 2 analysis by focusing on improving the shelter capacity and available geodatabase for the county. Dan Campbell, earth loGISTICS LLC, developed a website for the **3RiversHUG** and worked with Rich Davies of the Western Disaster Center to post it on the www.hazus.org website. Keith High, earth loGISTICS LLC, has agreed to serve as the private sector liaison for the group. Finally, Jamie Mitchem is participating in monthly national conference calls for HUG leaders and assisting Jamie Caplan Consulting with the implementation of the newly formed national University HAZUS User Group.



Benefits of Having a HUG



The benefits of having a HUG in southwestern Pennsylvania are already being realized. Communications and collaboration between academia and the public, private, and third (not-for-profit) sectors are improving, and this is assisting multi-disciplinary and multi-jurisdictional studies. The **3RiversHUG** is helping all stakeholders with their goals because academicians are able to expand their research and service activities, their students gain valuable real world experience, the public sector receives much-needed assistance to complete valuable data gathering and analysis projects, and the private sector provides certified engineering analysis, advice, and gains networking opportunities and potential internship candidates. Finally, the community benefits from improved mitigation and preparedness activities which may reduce losses from future hazard events at a relatively low cost. The **3RiversHUG** provides a win-win situation for all potential stakeholders while reducing the vulnerability of the region to disasters.

Project Cost / Funding Sources

Most of the work that **3RiversHUG** does currently is voluntary in nature. The group is composed of committed volunteers interested in a common goal to reduce losses from disasters in southwestern Pennsylvania, with the disastrous flooding from the remnants of Hurricane Ivan in 2004 freshly on their minds. The **3RiversHUG** plans to apply for grants to improve mitigation planning and emergency preparedness in southwestern Pennsylvania.

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Links and Resources

3RiversHUG
www.hazus.org/3RiversHUG/

