



## Acquisition Project, Clinton County, NY

### Full Mitigation Best Practice Story

#### *Clinton County, New York*

**Schuyler Falls, NY** - Severe flooding in the winter of 1996 motivated residents in the Town of Schuyler Falls to move out of flood impacted areas. When the Town refused to be the applicant in the buyout, residents prevailed upon Clinton County to be the buyout applicant. The match was obtained and the buyout proceeded, with savings realized in under a year and two additional properties acquired.



When the Town refused to be the applicant for the buyout, citing a possible loss of tax-base, the County agreed to be the applicant on the condition that matching funds were received from the State.

The state senator from the area was successful in attaining the match from the State Legislature, a key reason the buyout project was successful. The County donated in-kind services, and additional funds were received from private sources.

In all, the acquisition under the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) involved purchasing 19 residential structures and three empty lots along the Saranac River. Based on the damage to these residences during the January 1996 flood and the history of flooding in Schuyler Falls, it was estimated that full benefit payback would occur within 20 years.

Flooding struck again in November 1996, and although they were impacted, most of the acquired properties were vacant. Substantial savings from this project were realized in less than a year. The project was completed under budget with two additional properties acquired.

A follow-up analysis confirmed that the acquisition project had a minimal impact on the tax base in Schuyler Falls. The total assessed value of the acquired neighborhood was approximately \$1.5 million. Currently, there are \$150 million assessments in the Town. The acquisition of the properties affected one cent per thousand, and therefore, did not have a detrimental effect on the tax base in the community.

#### Activity/Project Location

Geographical Area: **Single County in a State**

FEMA Region: **Region II**

State: **New York**

County: **Clinton County**

## Key Activity/Project Information

Sector: **Public**  
Hazard Type: **Flooding**  
Activity/Project Type: **Acquisition/Buyouts**  
Activity/Project Start Date: **11/1996**  
Activity/Project End Date: **Ongoing**  
Funding Source: **Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP); Local Sources; Private funds; State sources**  
Funding Recipient: **Local Government**

## Activity/Project Economic Analysis

Cost: **\$692,000.00 (Actual)**

## Activity/Project Disaster Information

Mitigation Resulted From Federal Disaster? **Unknown**  
Value Tested By Disaster? **Yes**  
Tested By Federal Disaster #: **No Federal Disaster specified**  
Year First Tested: **1996**  
Repetitive Loss Property? **Unknown**

## Reference URLs

Reference URL 1: <http://www.floodsmart.gov>  
Reference URL 2: <http://www.fema.gov/government/grant/hmgp/index.shtm>

## Main Points

- In November 1996, the acquired properties were impacted again by flooding, however, as most were vacant due to the buyout, the recovery costs were minimal.
- The project was completed under budget with two additional properties acquired.
- The acquisition of the properties affected one cent per 1,000, and therefore, did not have a detrimental effect on the tax base in the community.