



Grant Effectiveness Case Study: Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe

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FEMA



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I. Overview

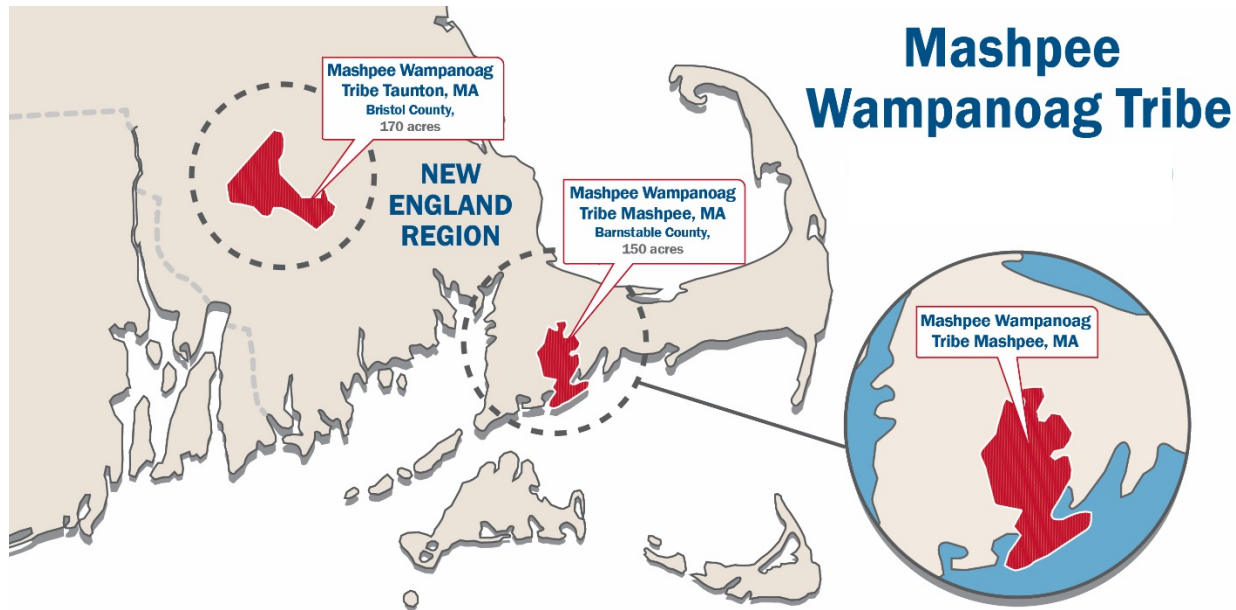
In 2019, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) conducted a grant effectiveness case study with the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe to understand how the Tribe uses grant funds to increase its emergency management capabilities for both all-hazards response and preventing terrorist attacks. To inform this case study, FEMA personnel conducted a site visit to the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe reservation in Barnstable County in August 2019 to meet with the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe Emergency Management Department (MWTEMD). During this visit, FEMA discussed the Tribe's management and use of preparedness grant dollars. FEMA collected information in this case study with the cooperation and participation of the MWTEMD.

The following findings emerged from this case study:

- The Tribe's resourceful investment of funding from multiple Federal grant programs significantly improved the Tribe's ability to prepare for and respond to disaster events. Investments from multiple Federal and state grant programs supported the Tribe in building and sustaining key capabilities in response, recovery, mitigation, prevention, and protection.
- The Tribe built these capabilities based on their distinctive approach to emergency management, which prioritizes the safety of tribal elders and the Tribe's most vulnerable members during incident response.
- Tribal Homeland Security Grant Program (THSGP) funding significantly improved the Tribe's capabilities that support terrorism preparedness. Specifically, THSGP-funded investments strengthened the Tribe's emergency management program and other capabilities built initially using a combination of state and Federal funding.
- With improvements in capabilities through the THSGP, the Tribe increased its ability to contribute to the regional capability of the greater Cape Cod area and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts by serving as a resource for mutual aid to Barnstable County and the Commonwealth.

II. About the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe

The Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe is a federally recognized tribe in Bristol County and Barnstable County in Massachusetts that was re-acknowledged by the Federal Government in 2007. Currently, the Tribe is made up of 2,934 members and occupies 150 acres in Mashpee, Massachusetts, near Cape Cod and 170 acres in Taunton, Massachusetts. As shown below, this case study focuses on the reservation in Barnstable County.



III. Assessing Risks and Capabilities

Threats and Hazards

One of FEMA's objectives for this case study was to better understand how the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe identifies risks and establishes capability targets through the Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA) or other risk and capability assessments. In accordance with FEMA THSGP guidance, the Tribe completed the THIRA after receiving THSGP funding in 2017. The Tribe faces a range of threats and hazards that include weather-related events and the threat of terrorism.

The Tribe's greatest weather-related threats and hazards relate to its exposure to the Atlantic Ocean. For example, the Tribe experiences nor'easters, which are storms that form along the East Coast and bring heavy rain or snow. Nor'easters occur most frequently between September and April and can cause coastal flooding, shoreline erosion, hurricane-strength winds, and blizzards. Other natural disasters, such as flooding, occur in every season. Wildfires also frequently occur on tribal lands due to the relatively high flammability of the pitch pine and scrub oak forest.

The Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe's risk for a terrorist attack is increased by three factors: its proximity to critical infrastructure, its location within a major tourist destination, and its historical and cultural significance as the first tribe to greet the pilgrims at Plymouth Rock. The Tribe's lands are located near Joint Base Cape Cod (JBCC), a full-scale joint base that houses five military commands, and the Pilgrim Nuclear Power Station (PNPS). The Tribe's lands are also located within Cape Cod, the overall population of which increases by about 300% during the peak of summer tourism. In 2018, the Tribe received a suspicious, potentially threatening letter postmarked from Germany, and multiple tribal personnel handled the letter. Soon after the incident, the Tribe learned that similar letters were also sent to



the Indian Health Service (IHS) office in Nashville, Tennessee, and other tribes in the Northeast. In addition, the Tribe experienced winter storms and a tornado that touched down in Yarmouth, Massachusetts, in 2019.

Since 2011, the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe was included, along with Barnstable County and the Town of Mashpee, in two Federal disaster declarations to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for severe winter storms and flooding. These declarations made FEMA Public Assistance available to the Tribe in 2013 (DR-4110) and 2015 (DR-4214).¹ FEMA's Public Assistance Grant Program provides supplemental grants to state, tribal, territorial, and local governments and certain types of private nonprofits so that communities can quickly respond to and recover from major disasters or emergencies.²

Approach to Emergency Management

In general, the Tribe promotes a whole community approach to emergency management, with a focus on its tribal elders and most vulnerable members, whom the Tribe prioritizes in many aspects of daily life. Approximately 50 elders meet the criteria for most vulnerable. The Tribe also prioritizes individuals with health and medical needs. During an emergency, the Tribe's approach to incident response mirrors this focus by prioritizing tribal elders and the most vulnerable members and expending resources accordingly. The MWTEMD's first action after receiving grant funding was to create an elder and vulnerable member preparedness checklist so that response action and resources can be targeted accordingly during an emergency.

IV. Grant Funding and Priorities

During this case study, FEMA also sought to better understand how the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe manages and allocates preparedness grant funding. The Tribe's elder- and vulnerable member-focused approach to incident response and emergency management informs this strategy. In addition, multiple Federal and state programs contributed to building the Tribe's initial capabilities in emergency management. The Tribe's THSGP-funded investments amplified the impact of the Tribe's previous efforts by building new capabilities in all-hazards response and terrorism preparedness. This section summarizes these investments by grant program, and the following section describes their impacts, which center on the Tribe's emergency management program, the response to tribal elders during an incident, and mutual aid.

Grant Allocation Priorities

The Tribe uses the following process to allocate preparedness grant funding. Preparedness priorities are derived from the Tribe's emergency operations plan, its FEMA-approved tribal multi-hazard mitigation plan, and its determined needs. To determine which projects to fund, the Director of Emergency Management considers the Tribe's priorities and estimates funding availability and gaps by reviewing previous years' funding levels. The Director of Emergency Management sets grant-funded project priorities, which the Tribal Council then approves.

"Self-resiliency is one of the main things the THSGP funding gave us."

- Nelson Andrews Jr., Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe Emergency Management Director

The Tribe uses funds from the THSGP and the Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) Program, which are FEMA preparedness grant programs, and the Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) Grant Program, which is a FEMA non-disaster mitigation grant program, to build new capabilities and sustain the Tribe's current capabilities.



Grant Programs

Before receiving THSGP funding, the Tribe leveraged multiple grant programs to invest in its preparedness capabilities, which included FEMA’s EMPG and PDM grant programs. These grant programs included FEMA EMPG and the PDM. The Tribe also used other Federal and state grant programs to build the Tribe’s initial emergency management capability, which consists of two part-time emergency management personnel, generators, and excess equipment. Through the THSGP program, however, the Tribe built a full-time EMD that can respond more quickly and effectively during events, collect information for situational awareness before and during an incident, and serve as a regional resource for mutual aid to Barnstable County and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. All of these factors contribute to the increased resilience of the Tribe.

FEMA EMPG

The EMPG provides Federal funding to states to assist state, local, territorial, and tribal governments in preparing for all hazards. Each year, FEMA awards the Commonwealth of Massachusetts EMPG funding, which Massachusetts then distributes to tribal and local jurisdictions based on population. Between FY 2015 and FY 2019, the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe has received between \$2,500 and \$2,700 in EMPG funding each year.

The EMPG-funded investments in Table 1 are highlighted in this report and speak to the capabilities that have been built and sustained in all-hazards preparedness for the MWTEMD:

Table 1: EMPG Investment Impacts

Impact	EMPG Investment
Response to Tribal Elders	Generators
Emergency Management Department	Incident Command System (ICS) and Security Training
Mutual Aid	Resources to Barnstable County

FEMA PDM

In addition to the THSGP and EMPG programs, the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe also received \$64,200 in FEMA funding through the PDM Grant Program in FY 2015 to develop a new hazard mitigation plan.

The primary purpose of the hazard mitigation plan is to develop preventative measures that significantly reduce the cost of post-disaster cleanup. Planning that occurs as part of creating the hazard mitigation plan allows the Tribe to develop mitigation actions that minimize the economic and social disruption that can result from floods, snowstorms, hurricanes, and other natural hazards. When conducted before a hazard event, such as flooding, mitigation actions greatly reduce the impact and costs associated with recovery afterward. FEMA requires state, tribal, territorial, and local governments to develop and adopt hazard mitigation plans as a condition for receiving certain types of non-emergency disaster assistance, including funding for mitigation projects. The Tribe’s adoption and implementation of the hazard mitigation plan will also assist the Tribe in becoming eligible to receive assistance from FEMA programs such as the Community Rating System (CRS), the PDM Grant Program, the Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) Grant Program, and the post-disaster Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP).³

Other Federal and State Grant Programs

The Tribe also receives funding through the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) AmeriCorps program, the U.S. Department of the Interior’s Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA), and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH). Before THSGP and the formation of the full-time MWTEMD, the Tribe used MDPH



Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) funds to support the Tribe’s emergency management needs.

The Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe supplemented their preparedness capabilities with Project TRANSAM, a cooperative program between the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) and IHS that distributes medical equipment and other supplies obtained from the closure of military bases and other sources. The Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe has acquired several General Services Administration (GSA) surplus items through this program, typically only paying for shipping, handling, and administrative expenses.⁴

To address the risk associated with its proximity to the PNPS, the Tribe also participates in two U.S. Department of Energy (DOE)-funded working groups: the Nuclear Energy Tribal Working Group (NETWG) and the Tribal Radioactive Materials Transportation Committee (TRMTC). Through these groups, the Tribe works with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, and the DOE to coordinate the closure and decommission of the PNPS, which is less than 20 miles from the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe reservation.

FEMA THSGP

The Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe received its first THSGP award in FY 2017 for \$568,708. The THSGP awards competitive grants to eligible federally recognized tribes and has been available since FY 2008. Since FY 2013, THSGP has awarded \$10 million per year to tribes based on eligibility and effectiveness. On average, FEMA awards between 20 and 25 THSGP grants to federally recognized tribes each year.

The Tribe’s THSGP-funded investments in Table 2 are highlighted in this report and speak to the capabilities that were built and sustained in terrorism and all-hazards preparedness for the MWTEMD:

Table 2: THSGP Investment Impacts

Impact	THSGP Investment
Response to Tribal Elders	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Generators- Four-wheel drive (4WD) vehicle- Emergency strobe lights
Emergency Management Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- MWTEMD Personnel- ICS, security, and Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training- Active shooter workshop
Mutual Aid	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Resources to Barnstable County- Drone program- Equipment and personnel for whole community exercises

Table 3 displays a summary of FY 2015–2019 FEMA grant funding award amounts that were used to build preparedness capabilities for disaster response. The MWTEMD coordinates the funds received across these grant programs to make complementary investments that magnify the capabilities of the department.



Table 3: FEMA Funding Used to Build Preparedness Capabilities for Disaster Response

Grant Program	Award Amounts					
	FY 15	FY 16	FY 17	FY 18	FY 19	Total
THSGP	\$0	\$0	\$568,708	\$0	\$0	\$568,708
EMPG	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,700	\$12,700
PDM HMA	\$64,200	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$64,200
TOTAL	\$66,700	\$2,500	\$571,208	\$2,500	\$2,700	\$648,608

V. Preparedness Capability Investment Impacts

This case study found the impact of THSGP-funded investments on the ability of the Tribe to meet its emergency management priorities to be very important. The THSGP funding that the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe first received in FY 2017 strengthened the Tribe's capacity to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to, and recover from potential terrorist attacks and other hazards. Before the THSGP award, the Tribe did not have sufficient resources to support a full-time EMD. With THSGP funding, the Tribe has built its EMD and significantly advanced the Tribe's preparedness and response capabilities for terrorist attacks and all-hazard events. The Tribe has also built whole community preparedness around prioritizing elder and vulnerable members' safety and security. The descriptions in the following sections detail how these investments have contributed to the Tribe's capabilities.

MWTEMD

Since the FY 2017 THSGP funding, the MWTEMD has grown from two part-time personnel (funded under PHEP) to two full-time staff members whose salaries are covered by THSGP. The MWTEMD operates under the umbrella of the Tribe's Operations Department and is responsible for emergency management, planning, operations, logistics, finance, and administration. The MWTEMD takes a whole community approach to emergency management that prioritizes the tribal elders and other vulnerable members.

"Ultimately, we would not have been able to do any of the trainings or have a department at all. Without the THSGP, there would not be a Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe Emergency Management Department."

-Nelson Andrews Jr., Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe Emergency Management Director

The MWTEMD also uses THSGP grant funds to provide trainings that expand the Tribe's emergency management capabilities. The MWTEMD used \$400 in FY 2018 EMPG funds and \$1,000 in FY 2017 THSGP funds to provide five ICS trainings to tribal personnel. Between 12 and 20 participants attended each training. FEMA's Emergency Management Institute (EMI) hosted these trainings, which focused on the basics of incident command and provided an overview of the National Incident Management System. Additionally, the Tribe provided training in response to suspicious mail sent to the Tribe from outside the country. This mail incident highlighted gaps in the Tribe's security. In response, the MWTEMD used \$600 in FY 2017 THSGP/EMPG funds to provide training on handling suspicious letters to three tribal Security Department staff. Additionally, the Tribe and IHS organized a training at the United South and

Eastern Tribes (USET) meeting on safe mail handling for all tribes responsible for USET emergency preparedness.

In addition, the Tribe relies on its CERT members to support emergency management efforts, including assisting tribal elders. CERT training is a program that educates volunteers about disaster preparedness and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations. In 2017, the Director of the MWTEMD used \$640 in THSGP funds to complete a FEMA CERT train-the-trainer course, which included an American Red Cross certification in automated external defibrillators (AED), cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), and first aid instruction. Since becoming an instructor, the Director has trained two tribal CERTs and the Tribe's AmeriCorps members. In addition to the training, all of the Tribe's CERT members received CERT backpacks containing emergency management supplies. To further build the community's capabilities, the MWTEMD provided CPR and AED trainings to eight tribal staff in August 2019.

In response to recent active shooter incidents nationwide, the MWTEMD formed an active shooter working group with school staff and tribal police. The MWTEMD used \$6,000 in THSGP funds to hire an external subject-matter expert to lead an active shooter roundtable workshop with the working group and representatives from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, including MEMA and MDPH, Barnstable County, and the Town of Mashpee.¹ During the workshop, participants discussed potential deficiencies in communication among staff members coordinating a response to an active shooter. Following the workshop, the MWTEMD produced an after-action review and improvement plan that the Tribe has started to implement. The Tribe also plans to hold an active shooter exercise soon.



Picture 1: Active shooter roundtable with Tribal, State, and Federal Partners

Ability to Respond to Tribal Elders and Vulnerable Members

The Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe used THSGP funds and other grant funds to purchase equipment that has enabled the MWTEMD to better respond to community members in need, particularly tribal elders and vulnerable members. The MWTEMD makes it a priority to conduct wellness checks on these individuals during storms and other adverse weather conditions and provides additional support as necessary. The Tribe used \$3,600 in FY 2017–2018 EMPG funds to purchase seven generators that the MWTEMD used during events to supply tribal elders' homes with backup electricity, especially to keep medical equipment running during power outages. During severe weather events, MWTEMD personnel will connect and start up generators at elders' homes if needed. As of August 2019, these generators have



Picture 2: 4WD truck, emergency supplies, and generator purchased with FEMA

¹ Participants in the active shooter roundtable workshop included the Horsley Witten Group, MWT Emergency Management, MWT Police, IHS, MWT Facilities, MWT Information Technologies, Tribal Emergency Response Task Force, the Barnstable County Incident Management Team, MEMA, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and Emergency Preparedness, and the Barnstable County Sheriff's Office of Emergency Management.

provided emergency power to 18 homes affected by significant rain or winter storms.

The MWTEMD also used \$44,476 in FY 2017 THSGP funds to purchase a 4WD truck with plowing capabilities. The MWTEMD uses the 4WD truck to respond to elders and vulnerable members like children affected by snowstorms in the winter and during emergency situations, as well as to transport boats, campers, and cargo trailers during incidents. Before purchasing these vehicles with grant funding, the MWTEMD would borrow the Tribe's public works vehicles to support the community in the winter months, because the MWTEMD's two-wheel drive vehicles were unable to navigate dangerous road conditions. The Tribe also used \$6,921 in FY 2017 THSGP funds to purchase emergency strobe lights for the dash, visor, and rear of vehicle. The MWTEMD has used the THSGP-funded lights during state and county exercises.

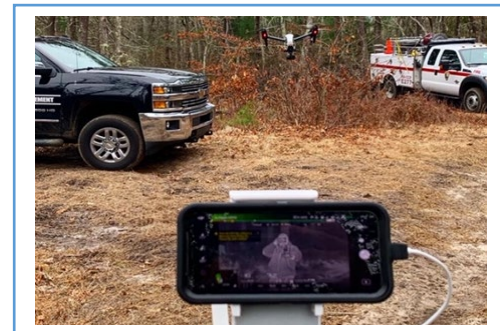
The MWTEMD highlighted the utility of this equipment during the 2018 winter snowstorms. In one instance, when checking in on a tribal elder, the MWTEMD found the elder, her children, and her grandchildren—including a newborn infant—stranded in a house with no heat. The MWTEMD used a THSGP-funded emergency vehicle to plow the ice, snow, and debris trapping the family in the house and to transport them to a safe location. On a separate occasion, an elder was trapped in her house with the door frozen shut and her driveway covered in ice. The MWTEMD used the grant-funded 4WD truck to plow to break through the ice on the driveway. Once MWTEMD personnel were able to reach the home, they chiseled the door out of the ice and freed the elder from her home.

Asset to Barnstable County and MEMA

THSGP, EMPG, and other grant funds have enabled the MWTEMD to build partnerships and become an asset to the surrounding Barnstable County and to MEMA. To advance the MWTEMD's goal of supporting the whole community in emergency situations, the Director of the MWTEMD attends the Barnstable Regional Emergency Planning Committee meetings. The Tribe has a formal agreement with Barnstable County to work together to address various threats in the region. Under the agreement, the Tribe and county share resources, including vehicles, drones, generators, boats, cots, blankets, shelter tents, and other equipment as needed.

THSGP funds have also enabled the MWTEMD to create one of the most advanced drone programs in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The MWTEMD used \$1,900 in FY 2017 THSGP grant money to fund Part 107 waiver⁵ certification (non-hobbyist small unmanned aircraft operations) and small unmanned aircraft training for two Tribe members, allowing them to operate drones beyond standard Federal Aviation Administration regulations. With these certifications, the Tribe is one of the only entities in the Commonwealth with the ability to operate drones, in addition to the Massachusetts State Police and the Barnstable County Sheriff. Drones allow for the collection of a wide range of preparedness data and have wide applicability in response to human-caused or natural disasters. The Tribe acquired this equipment using \$11,511 in FY 2017 THSGP funds to support the Tribe's controlled burn efforts and to locate lost or missing persons.

In 2019, the MWTEMD used the drones to monitor hot spots as part of a controlled burn with the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR). Representatives from the Tribe participated in the controlled burn and in the S-130⁶ and S-190⁷ Wildland Firefighter trainings. This controlled burn held special significance to the Tribe, as it was similar to the controlled burns tribal ancestors used to maintain the land and replenish it with new growth and wildlife habitat. After the controlled burn on Mashpee



Picture 3: Drone equipment used for controlled burns



Wampanoag Tribe land, the Tribe used the drones to assist another controlled burn for the Town of Mashpee.

The MWTEMD has also used the drones' imaging capabilities (both 2D and 3D) to assist with pre- and post-disaster assessments. Following a series of tornadoes that hit and damaged parts of Barnstable County in 2019, the Director of the MWTEMD reported to the Barnstable County Multi-Agency Coordination Center (MACC), the county's Emergency Operations Center (EOC), to offer assistance with search and rescue and other post-disaster assessments using the Tribe's drones.

In addition, the MWTEMD currently uses the drones to map the reservation as part of its new hazard mitigation plan. Specifically, the Tribe uses the drones to create base maps that will be used for pre-disaster assessments, particularly for historic places like the Tribe's cemetery and the Old Indian Meeting House, which was built in 1684 and is the oldest Native American church in the eastern United States. The results of these assessments will identify hazards that will be addressed in the Tribe's hazard mitigation plan. This is an example of how communities can leverage federally funded grant investments strategically to build capabilities.

During power outages in 2018, the MWTEMD contributed to the larger Barnstable County community by opening the Mashpee Wampanoag Government Center as a public shelter, marking the first time the Tribe had opened a shelter to members of the community outside the Tribe. During this incident, the shelter had been open for four days when the Director of the Barnstable County American Red

"Without the THSGP funding, we would not be such an asset to Barnstable County or MEMA and would rely more heavily upon them."

-Nelson Andrews Jr., Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe Emergency Management Director

Cross asked if the Tribe's shelter could remain open so that Barnstable County public schools, which had been used as shelters, could close down shelter operations and reopen in their capacity as schools. Overall, the Tribe housed 10 people during this incident, including both members of the Tribe and non-members. The MWTEMD also used THSGP-funded vehicles to transport people to and from the shelter during this incident.

Additionally, in late 2018 and early 2019, the MWTEMD participated in two collaborative exercises: a hurricane exercise with MEMA and an exercise with JBCC. The hurricane exercise with MEMA and Massachusetts Maritime Academy graduates consisted of a tabletop exercise for the Tribe's CERT members. A total of 14 personnel across three agencies, including two from the MWTEMD, participated in the exercise. The MWTEMD plans on holding another hurricane exercise in 2020. In 2018, the MWTEMD used grant-funded equipment, such as the 4WD vehicle and an emergency generator, to help support the JBCC Vigilant Guard exercise. This exercise helped build team skills and capabilities, including organizational team collaboration and incident management readiness.

VI. Grant Recipient Program Feedback

During the site visit to Barnstable County, FEMA collected feedback from the Tribe on how FEMA could better support the Tribe's preparedness activities. Suggestions highlighted that the largest need of all tribal nations is to fund tribal nations directly and to establish parity in grant funding. One recommendation involved encouraging Congress to appropriate and allocate sufficient funding of the capabilities of tribal nations to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to, and recover from potential terrorist attacks and other hazards, including \$300,000 annually to every tribe across the country to support tribal emergency management programs.

Representatives from the MWTEMD also indicated a desire for more substantial feedback on how they can improve their applications to become better qualified for grants in the future, including receiving more detailed feedback after their grant applications have been denied.



Another suggestion to better support tribal preparedness was to form a Tribal Affairs Office under the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) instead of within FEMA. Much like other departments of the U.S. Government that have tribal affairs offices, creating a DHS Tribal Affairs Office would give tribes a main point of contact in DHS as a whole department rather than within a single component agency.

VII. Conclusion

The findings of this case study illustrate the positive impact of preparedness grant dollars on the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe's emergency management capabilities. In addition to other grant-funded investments, the Tribe used THSGP funds to build its EMD and close gaps in several of its preparedness and response capability areas by investing in personnel, trainings, and equipment. As a result of these THSGP-funded investments, the Tribe has increased its self-reliance and resilience to disasters and has positioned itself as a resource to the whole Cape Cod community.

The case study also describes the considerations and processes that the Tribe uses to determine how to invest their Federal grant dollars. FEMA will use the results from this case study to enhance preparedness programs, develop tailored technical assistance, and better communicate the impacts of preparedness and mitigation grant programs to Federal stakeholders; Congress; and state, local, tribal, and territorial governments.



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