

SECTION I

FERGUS COUNTY EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN

The Basic Plan is an overview of the jurisdiction's emergency response organization and policies. It cites the legal authorities for emergency operations, summarizes the situations addressed by the plan, explains the general concept of operations, and assigns responsibilities for emergency planning and operations. It also contains the signature page for acceptance of the EOP and the revision tracking page.

2019

Fergus County Emergency Operations Plan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Fergus County Emergency Operations Plan

The Fergus County Emergency Operations Plan, authorized by Montana Code Annotated (MCA) Title 10, Chapter 3, Part 201, identifies and assigns disaster responsibility for City, Town and County personnel in the preparation for, response to, recovery from, and mitigation of natural or man-caused disasters. This Emergency Operations Plan covers all of Fergus County including the following jurisdictions: the City of Lewistown; Towns of Winifred, Grass Range, Moore, and Denton; and the unincorporated communities of Ayers Ranch Colony, Brooks, Buffalo, Christina, Coffee Creek, Danvers, Deerfield Colony, Eddies Corner, Forest Grove, Garneill, Giltedge, Glengarry, Hanover, Heath, Hilger, Hoosac, King Ranch Colony, Lewistown Heights, Maiden, Piper, Ross Fork, Roy, Spring Creek Junction, Suffolk, Straw, Tyler, Valentine, and Ware.

This Plan provides guidance to personnel who have responsibilities for the protection of lives and property. This Plan is not intended to impede the standard operating guidelines but is the coordinating document for all emergency or disaster planning, response, and recovery efforts.

Fergus County Disaster and Emergency Services (DES) will direct and update the coordination of this document. This Plan will be updated on a regular basis.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

Fergus County is served by a Sheriff's Office; the City of Lewistown Police Department; Central Montana 9-1-1; twelve (12) fire districts; Central Montana Search and Rescue; five (5) ambulance services; Central Montana Medical Center; Central Montana Health District; Fergus County Road and Bridge Department; City of Lewistown Public Works; and Fergus County DES.

The Fergus County Sheriff's Office maintains a 24 hours a day, 7 days a week work schedule with fulltime sworn officers and has reserve deputies as well as a Search and Rescue team.

The Lewistown Police Department also maintains a 24 hour a day operations.

Central Montana 9-1-1 Center provides Emergency 9-1-1 service for Fergus, Judith Basin, and Petroleum Counties. Included in this service is the ability for individuals to text to 9-1-1 and reverse 9-1-1.

Fire service is provided by twelve (12) fire districts and four (4) fire departments. All are volunteer except for Lewistown Fire and Rescue. The districts are Grass Range, Lewistown Rural, Winifred, Coffee Creek, Denton, Hilger, Roy, Moore, Beaver Creek/Cottonwood, Heath, North Fork Flat Willow, and Cheadle. The incorporated Towns of Denton, Grass Range, and Winifred and the City of Lewistown have fire departments.

Central Montana Ambulance provides response and transport service including Advanced Life Support. Other volunteer ambulance services include Winifred, Denton, Roy, and Grass Range Ambulances. Moore offers a non-transport EMS service.

Central Montana Medical Center (CMMC) is a 25-bed Level IV trauma center that includes 6 ER beds and a hazmat decontamination area.

Fergus County is part of the Central Montana Health District, which provides a health officer, public health nurse, public health emergency planner, and sanitarian.

Public works is provided by the City of Lewistown, the Towns of Denton, Winifred, Grass Range and Moore, and the Fergus County Road and Bridge Department.

Coordination of emergency services is accomplished by the fulltime Fergus County DES Coordinator and a Deputy Coordinator.

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AGREEMENTS

Fergus County has agreements with the following counties: Pondera, Chouteau, Teton, Toole, Liberty, Glacier, Judith Basin, Wheatland, Golden Valley, Petroleum, Phillips, Blaine, Cascade, and Hill. The County also has agreements with the Blackfeet, Rocky Boy, and Fort Belknap Nations. Fergus County has firefighting mutual aid agreements with Department of Natural Resources and Conservation and has a general mutual aid agreement with Bureau of Land Management. All fire districts within Fergus County are represented at the Fergus County Fire Council and mutual aid agreements have been signed by the districts.

POPULATION

Fergus County has an estimated population of 11,291 according the U.S. Census Bureau, 2017. Lewistown, the County seat, has a population of 5,918; Winifred, 201; Grass Range, 108; Moore, 196; and Denton, 247.

EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

Schools are located throughout Fergus County. In Lewistown, there are five schools: Fergus High School, Lewis and Clark Elementary, Garfield Elementary, Highland Park Elementry, and Lewistown Junior High School. Administrative offices are located in the Lincoln Building. Central Montana Headstart provides preschool. Other preschool services are provided by private individuals or companies. Grass Range, Moore, Roy, Denton, and Winifred all have schools which house all grades. Other schools are for elementary age students and are located within in the Hutterite Colonies: Deerfield, King, Spring Creek and Ayers. There is also one Amish school.

TERRAIN AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Fergus County covers 4,339 square miles. The County has an average altitude of 3,960 feet above sea level. The Big and Little Snowy Mountains are located in the southern part of the County. The Missouri River forms the northern border of Fergus County and is part of the Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument and the Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge. The Judith River runs through the County and the Big Spring Creek passes through the City of Lewistown.

There are dams that provide flood control for the City of Lewistown which include Hanson, Pike Creek, East Fork and Big Casino Creek. Other dams which may affect Fergus County include Canyon Ferry; Holter; Hauser; Ackley Lake; Gibson; Willow Creek; and Tiber Dams. The owners/operators of these dams have provided inundation maps and Emergency Action Plans.

TRANSPORTATION

Highways which pass through Fergus County include US Highways 87 and 191 and Montana Highways 19, 80, 81, 200, 236, 237, 238, 466, and 547. The Montana Department of Transportation maintains 313 miles of Highway and 189 bridges. Fergus County maintains approximately 1700 miles of road and 122 bridges.

Railroads in include a line through the western part of Fergus County through Coffee Creek, Denton, Spring Creek and Ross Fork. This line is operated by Central Montana Rail. This same line also hosts a passenger train that runs from Hanover to Denton. Burlington Northern Santa Fe operates a short spur line that runs west from the Town of Moore.

Lewistown Municipal Airport has no commercial air service. The closest commercial airports are in Great Falls and Billings. There are approximately 88 aircraft located at the Lewistown Airport. The airport is also used for air ambulances from Great Falls and Billings hospitals and twice daily UPS planes. Malmstrom Air Force Base uses the airport on a regular basis and occasionally as part of their missile site program. The Air and Army National Guards also use the runway. A significant number of private

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aircraft also use the facility. The Bureau of Land Management use the airport as a base of air operations for wildland fire protection.

Other airports serving small private and charter aircraft are located in Denton, Grass Range, Moore, Sand Creek Wildlife Station, and Winifred.

PLAN ORGANIZATION

The Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) consists of a basic plan, annexes, appendices, and attachments:

- Section I: **The Basic Plan** is an overview of the jurisdiction's emergency response organization and policies. It cites the legal authorities for emergency operations, summarizes the situations addressed by the Plan, and explains the general concept of operations, and assigns responsibilities for emergency planning and operations. It also contains the signature page for acceptance of the EOP and the revision tracking page.
- Section II: **Command and Control** contains information on response and recovery efforts. This includes the National Incident Management System, Emergency Response Matrix and extra ordinary powers.
- Section III: **Emergency Support Functions** contains information on support of an incident through resource management, communication, mass casualty, evacuation, debris management, volunteer management, and critical incident stress management.
- Section IV: **Hazard Specific Annexes** provide additional detailed information applicable to the performance of particular functions in the face of a particular hazard.
- Section V: **Resources Information, Acronyms and Definitions** is intended to provide emergency responders with appropriate reference materials and information necessary for the mitigation of an incident or event.

Coordination

The EOP is the main coordinating and policy document for Fergus County, the City of Lewistown, and the Towns of Moore, Winifred, Grass Range, and Denton. This Plan provides for the coordinated response of local government to natural, technological or man-caused incidents, emergencies or disasters.

- Management and control of response personnel remains the responsibility of the tasked organization.
- Requests for assistance from local government jurisdictions included in this EOP must be made in accordance with existing agreements.
- Local governments must commit their resources to emergency operations and they may request assistance when their resources have been exhausted and/or are clearly inadequate to cope with the incident.
- All requests for assistance from the State or Federal government should be requested through the Fergus County DES and must be approved by the Fergus County Commission Presiding Chair.

Maintenance

The DES will coordinate the annual review and an annual exercise of the EOP, and will update the document accordingly.

Response Levels

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The Incident Commander or Unified Command classifies each incident. Each level is utilized to determine the extent of Emergency Operations Center (EOC) activation and the Operations Plan structure necessary to respond to the incident; and personnel to be notified of the incident.

Level 1	LIMITED RESPONSE: Incident within the capability of responding units. There is no threat to lives or environment. No mutual aid has been requested and the Incident Commander is comfortable with the stability of the incident.	Handled by responders
Level 2	MODERATE RESPONSE: Mutual aid or other request for resources has been initiated by the Incident Commander. Event may carry over into another staff period and/or there is a threat to lives and/or environment. Reporting to state agencies is required. (Hazmat Response)	Handled by IC and local resources. DES, Health District, CEO's may be notified at the IC's discretion. EOC may be partially activated.
Level 3	SIGNIFICANT RESPONSE: Incident will carry into the next shift change; lives and property are at risk and/or resources are being requested outside of the County.	Activation and staffing of EOC. Notification of CEO's. State DES notified. Financial considerations are made, declaration process begins.
Level 4	MAJOR RESPONSE: Large event or multiple events, longer duration, mutual aid resources are not available, and there are a large number of departments/agencies involved. Lives and property are threatened. Local Disaster Declaration required and request made to the Governor for State Disaster Declaration.	Unified Command - CEO's involved in decision making, PIO and public information dissemination required. Full activation of EOC.

The capabilities of the responders, number of casualties or amount of property damage, and the magnitude and duration of the event dictate the scope of any emergency response. Partial activation of the EOC occurs when a request is made for the DES Coordinator to respond. Full activation of the EOC is only contemplated for an event that exceeds the normal capabilities of local response agencies or when executive guidance and authorities are required.

Activation of the EOP

The Fergus County EOP is in effect at such time as:

- An incident, emergency and/or disaster occurs or is imminent or;
- The IC has requested assistance from DES or;
- An incident, emergency or disaster is declared by the jurisdiction's Chief Executive Officer(s) or;
- An incident, emergency, or disaster is declared by the Governor or;
- A Presidential or Federal agency declaration or designation is issued.

Concept of Operations:

- Disasters or emergency operations should reflect the daily operational responsibilities of an agency or department.
- Tasks and responsibilities should be assigned and conducted at the lowest level of each organization. Management and control of personnel will remain with the specific agency.
- Local governments and officials are ultimately responsible for disaster or emergency operations.
- State or Federal aid will be requested when local resources are exhausted.
- Requests for assistance from State or Federal agencies should go through the County DES Coordinator. This ensures proper documentation and coordination with the State and Federal agencies.
- The State DES will process assistance requests, coordinate State assistance, and prepare the necessary requests for Federal assistance with the Governor.

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- Once response activities cease, restoration of response capability is the next highest priority.
- During a disaster or emergency, all emergency agencies shall keep local government CEO's informed of their respective response efforts and must inform local government CEO's whenever outside assistance is needed. This is accomplished through the EOC.
- All departments, agencies or organizations must maintain detailed records of actions taken during incidents including: Date/time, actions taken, overtime, resources expended, and other information of value.
- Damage assessment information is the primary responsibility of the specific persons or agencies tasked in the appropriate annexes. However, all agencies must be prepared to provide input to the responsible agency(s).

The Incident Commander (IC) is the first responder on a given scene until relieved by a higher authority or by mutual agreement. The IC is responsible for the immediate tactical actions to control the incident.

The Emergency Operations Center (EOC) shall be activated, to the level deemed appropriate. The primary EOC is located at the County Complex, 121 8th Avenue South, Lewistown. The EOC may be located at a remote command trailer, vehicle, or other site. The DES Coordinator or Chief Executive Officers or Incident Commander may designate the activation and location of the EOC.

Emergency Declarations

DEFINITIONS

- Emergency: The imminent threat of a disaster causing immediate peril to life or property which timely action can avert or minimize. 10-3-103, M.C.A.
- Emergency Declaration: A formal decision by the Chairman of the Fergus County Commission, the Chief Executive or Governor that an emergency exists within his/her respective jurisdiction. 10-3-402, M.C.A.

PURPOSE

- An emergency declaration is used when either of the following conditions exists:
 - No losses have occurred; however, a threat to health, life, or property exists and the proclamation is needed to enact protective measures; or
 - Limited losses have occurred and the declaration is needed to enact response and protective measures to prevent further losses.
- An emergency declaration is a prerequisite to the following actions:
 - Requesting the Governor to enact specific emergency powers;
 - Use of the 2 mill emergency levy;
 - Evacuation of all or part of the population from an emergency area within the jurisdiction when necessary for the preservation of life.
 - Controlling ingress and egress to and from the emergency area, the movement of persons within the area, and the occupancy of premises;
 - Requests for the use of money from the State Emergency and Disaster Fund; and
 - Requests for state or federal assistance, including the Army Corps of Engineers.

An emergency declaration may be terminated when the condition no longer exists or recovery operations have been completed.

Disaster Declarations

DEFINITIONS

- Disaster: The occurrence or imminent threat of widespread or severe damage, injury, or loss of life or property resulting from any natural or manmade cause.
- Disaster Declaration: A formal decision by the Fergus County Commissioners, Chief Executive Officer or the Governor that a disaster exists within his/her respective jurisdiction. 10-3-403, M.C.A.

PURPOSE

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- A disaster declaration is used when severe losses have occurred to health, life and property and a declaration is needed to enact response and recovery measures.
- Review the distinction between emergency proclamation and a disaster declaration.
- A disaster declaration is a prerequisite to the following actions:
 - Requesting the governor to enact specific emergency powers;
 - Use of the 2 mill emergency levy;
 - Evacuation of all or part of the population from a disaster area within the jurisdiction when necessary for the preservation of life, and
 - Controlling ingress and egress to and from the disaster area, the movement of persons within the area, and the occupancy of premises;
 - Requests for the use of money from the State Emergency and Disaster Fund;
 - Requests for State or Federal assistance, including the Army Corps of Engineers

A disaster declaration may be terminated when the disaster condition no longer exists or recovery operations have been completed.

Continuity of Government

PURPOSE:

The objective of this section of the Fergus County EOP is to define a process to prepare for the continuity of government and continuity of operations in the event of an emergency.

Continuity of Government (COG): is defined as the ability of the jurisdiction to:

1. Ensure the line of political succession in order to maintain the effective and constitutional operations of government.
2. Ensure that essential services, programs and facilities are identified and that operational plans exist to enable services to continue.
3. Ensure that the infrastructure exists that will allow essential functions be delivered to Fergus County residents.

Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP): A Continuity of Operations Plan is a detailed emergency plan that outlines the steps to maintaining services in the event of an emergency.

Essential Functions: Essential functions are defined as those operations which

1. Provide vital services – life/safety
2. Exercise civil authority
3. Maintain the safety of the general public
4. Sustain the economy

In the event Fergus County Commissioners are unable to respond to an emergency or disaster on behalf of Fergus County, a three-member board will be formed, consisting of the Fergus County Sheriff, the Fergus County Attorney and a third member chosen by the Sheriff and County Attorney. The third member's qualifications shall be directed toward dealing with such crisis.

In the event the City Manager cannot respond to an emergency or disaster on behalf of the City of Lewistown, the Commission body shall elect one of the City Commission members to preside.

In the event that the Mayor of Denton, Grass Range, Moore, or Winifred is not able to respond for any reason, the President of the Town Council shall preside. In the event that the President is not able to respond, the Council body shall elect one of the Council members to preside.

In the case of an event which would cause the seat of government to be moved, Fergus County has designated the Fairgrounds Trade Center as a primary backup location for all offices normally located in the Courthouse.

Department Continuity of Operations

Fergus County Emergency Operations Plan

Each County Department shall develop a detailed COOP for their Department. Copies of these plans shall be maintained at the worksite, an established safe location, and one copy shall be filed with the DES Coordinator. At a minimum, the following areas must be addressed:

PROCEDURES

Essential Functions

- a. Each Department shall identify essential functions and services.
- b. Each Department shall identify the resources required at worksites to carry out these services.
- c. Each Department shall identify other departments or entities which are needed to carry out the essential function.

Communications

Each Department head shall ensure that he or she can be contacted in an emergency. The following contact numbers are required:

- o Telephone numbers
- o Cell phone numbers
- o Email address
- o Alternative contact

Contact number of backup personnel shall be provided.

Each Department head will identify a Department Emergency Coordinator who will serve as contact and liaison to the DES Coordinator. This person shall have the authority to develop, facilitate and coordinate the individual department's preparations.

Evacuation Plans

Each Department shall assist in developing and conspicuously posting evacuation plans. These plans shall include the ability to account for all employees and be able to transmit any discrepancies to the appropriate responding emergency officials.

Response Team and Essential Personnel Notification

Departments shall maintain rosters of personnel that would be responsible for coordinating a work site response to an emergency situation to ensure that essential services can be delivered. These rosters will be filed in the department's administrative files and with Fergus County DES.

Relocation Plans

Departments will assist in developing the relocation site in the event a work site needs to be moved in order to maintain the delivery of essential functions.

Implementation

COOP may be implemented when processes at the current location cannot proceed as normal. If COOP is implemented, immediate notification shall occur as follows:

1. DES Coordinator
2. County Commissioner
3. Elected Officials
4. Department Heads
5. Employees

A single point of contact will be appointed by the Department and will report to the DES Coordinator with department status and contact information.

Each COOP shall be reviewed every four (4) years which will be facilitated by the Fergus County DES Coordinator.

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Signature Acceptance

OFFICIALS

Fergus County Commissioner

Fergus County Commissioner

Fergus County Commissioner

Date_____

Attest:

Date_____

City of Lewistown, City Manager

Attest:

Date_____

City of Lewistown, Commission Chairman

Attest:

Date_____

Town of Denton, Mayor

Attest:

Date_____

Town of Grass Range, Mayor

Attest:

Date_____

Town of Moore, Mayor

Attest:

Date_____

Town of Winifred, Mayor

Attest:

