

Addendum: Baker City

Participation in the Northeast Oregon Regional Planning Process:

Completion of the Northeast Oregon Cities Survey

Adrian Albrich, the Eastern Oregon Risk Management Consultant from City County Insurance Services, distributed a memo on behalf of Oregon Natural Hazards Workgroup (ONHW) to all Region 7 Cities (Region 7 includes Baker, Grant, Union, and Wallowa Counties). The memo provided cities with information regarding the Natural Hazards Mitigation Planning process currently occurring in each county, and asked cities to identify local risks and desired mitigation activities through the completion of a small survey. ONHW, in its memo, also informed cities of their option to adopt the regional mitigation plan. Evan MacKenzie, Baker City Planning Director, completed ONHW's survey.

Baker City Meeting

On July 30, 2007 Evan MacKenzie organized a group of persons to meet and discuss Baker City's risk to natural hazards. The following persons attended the meeting:

Facilitator: Megan Findley, Oregon Natural Hazards Workgroup 'RARE' ("Resource Assistance for Rural Environments") Participant

Attendees:

Evan MacKenzie, Baker City Planning Department
Mark Bennett, Baker County Emergency Management
Michelle Owen, Baker City Public Works
Jennifer Watkins, Baker City Administrator

Meeting attendees discussed three topics in their meeting: 1) community sensitivities and resilience factors; 2) hazards: how the City's risks differed from the County's; and 3) mitigation action items. Each topic is described in greater detail below:

Community Sensitivity and Resilience Factors

- Baker City's most vulnerable asset is its unfiltered watershed. The City's water quality may be threatened and/or compromised should a moderate -to- high intensity wildfire burn through the watershed area. Within Baker County's Community Wildfire Protection Plan, the City's watershed is identified as a high priority wildland-urban interface zone. Although wildfire risk-reduction projects have been identified in the County's CWPP, the City prefers to emphasize the watershed's vulnerability in all of its hazard-related plans. Should a wildfire occur within the watershed's boundaries, the City may lose this source of water for five to ten years. Baker City's backup water supply comes from an aquifer that serves Baker County's agricultural community. The amount of water within this aquifer is unknown. This year, 2007, is the earliest the City has had to tap into the Goodrich Reservoir stored water. The aquifer (well) water is also being used this summer in an effort to meet demand.

Existing Plans and Policies:

- Baker City Development Code
- Baker City Comprehensive Plan

- Baker City Transportation System Plan
- Baker City Water Facilities Plan
- Baker City Wastewater Facilities Plan

Hazard Analysis

Baker City's risks to the following hazards were identified by the City's work-group on July 30, 2007. The work-group reviewed Baker County's risk assessment, and identified differences, if any. The City rated its risks and vulnerabilities as follows:

Drought

- Baker City's probability of, and vulnerability to drought are high, which is the same as Baker County's.
- Baker City is currently creating a water conservation ordinance; in part, the ordinance will help in guiding a licensing procedure for the distribution of backup water supplies.
- The City is interested in gaining a better understanding of the valley's aquifer capacities. Should the City lose its principle water source and continue to experience droughts, emergency relief will be drawn from these aquifers. Capacity is currently unknown; in order to plan for, and/or better prepare for drought emergencies, the City must first understand its need.

Earthquake

- Baker City's probability of an earthquake is "low," which is the same as the County's. The City's vulnerability, however is "moderate" which is higher than the County's assessment of "low."
- The City is concerned that DOGAMI's rapid visual assessment (see Appendix C) does not accurately rank buildings that would be of concern in an earthquake. The workgroup felt that Baker City's Junior High School should be of equal importance as the high school. Similarly, every building on Main Street should be prioritized for structural retrofit – especially including the Baker Tower which is the tallest structure in Baker City.

Wildfire

- The regional plan adequately addresses the wildfire risks the City of Baker City faces. The Baker County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) was completed in 2006, and will serve as Baker County's wildfire chapter within the regional natural hazards mitigation plan.
- The City would like to continue and expand wildfire fuels protection within its watershed and surrounding boundaries.

Flood

- The City's probability of experiencing floods is 'low,' which differs from the County's rating of 'high.' Baker City's vulnerability to flooding is 'moderate,' which is the same as the County's.
- The State's Regional Profile and Risk Assessment lists Old Settler's Slough as a "principle flood source." Baker City does not consider the slough a flood risk.
- Baker County's floodplain maps have not been updated since 1988. The City believes they are no longer accurate; since Mason Dam was built, flooding risks have diminished.

Landslides

- Due to its topography, Baker City has never experienced a landslide. Its probability of enduring a landslide in the future is therefore 'low,' and its vulnerability to a potential landslide is also 'low.' These ratings differ from the County's.

Volcanic Activity

- Baker City's risks to volcano-related hazards are adequately addressed in the regional risk assessment; the City does not identify any specific local issues that have not already been addressed in the regional plan.

Wind Storms

- Baker City's risks to wind storms are adequately addressed in the regional risk assessment; the City does not identify any specific local issues that have not already been addressed in the regional plan.

Winter Storms

- Baker City's probability of, and vulnerability to winter storms are high, which is the same as Baker County's risk. In addition to the information found in the regional assessment, the City's work-group identified their snow removal program as in need of funding.

Action Items

The City of Baker City has chosen to partner with Baker County on eleven mitigation actions (below) because actions will either directly benefit the city, or may be expanded to do so. Baker City and Baker County regularly partner on projects, and so this particular partnership is appropriately crafted. Baker City will be included at all of Baker County's future hazard mitigation planning meetings. Full text for action items can be viewed in Section 6, "Mission, Goals, and Action Items."

Drought

- Conduct an aquifer study for the Pine and Baker Valleys.
- Identify incentive programs to install water efficient devices.
- Develop community drought emergency plans and policies.

Earthquake

- Implement structural and non-structural retrofitting programs for public buildings, historically important structures, and critical facilities and infrastructure.

Flood

- Explore flood mitigation opportunities for homes and critical facilities subject to flooding. Baker City is interested in exploring multi-objective stream enhancement projects, which is listed under this action item's 'ideas for implementation.'
- Increase awareness of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).
- Explore the costs and benefits for participation in the NFIP's Community Rating System (CRS).

Wildfire

- Advocate for implementation of the actions identified in each county's Community Wildfire Protection Plan.

Baker City has added the following statement to this action's "ideas for implementation:"
"Continue fuels protection to the Baker City watershed and surrounding areas."

Wind Storms / Winter Storms

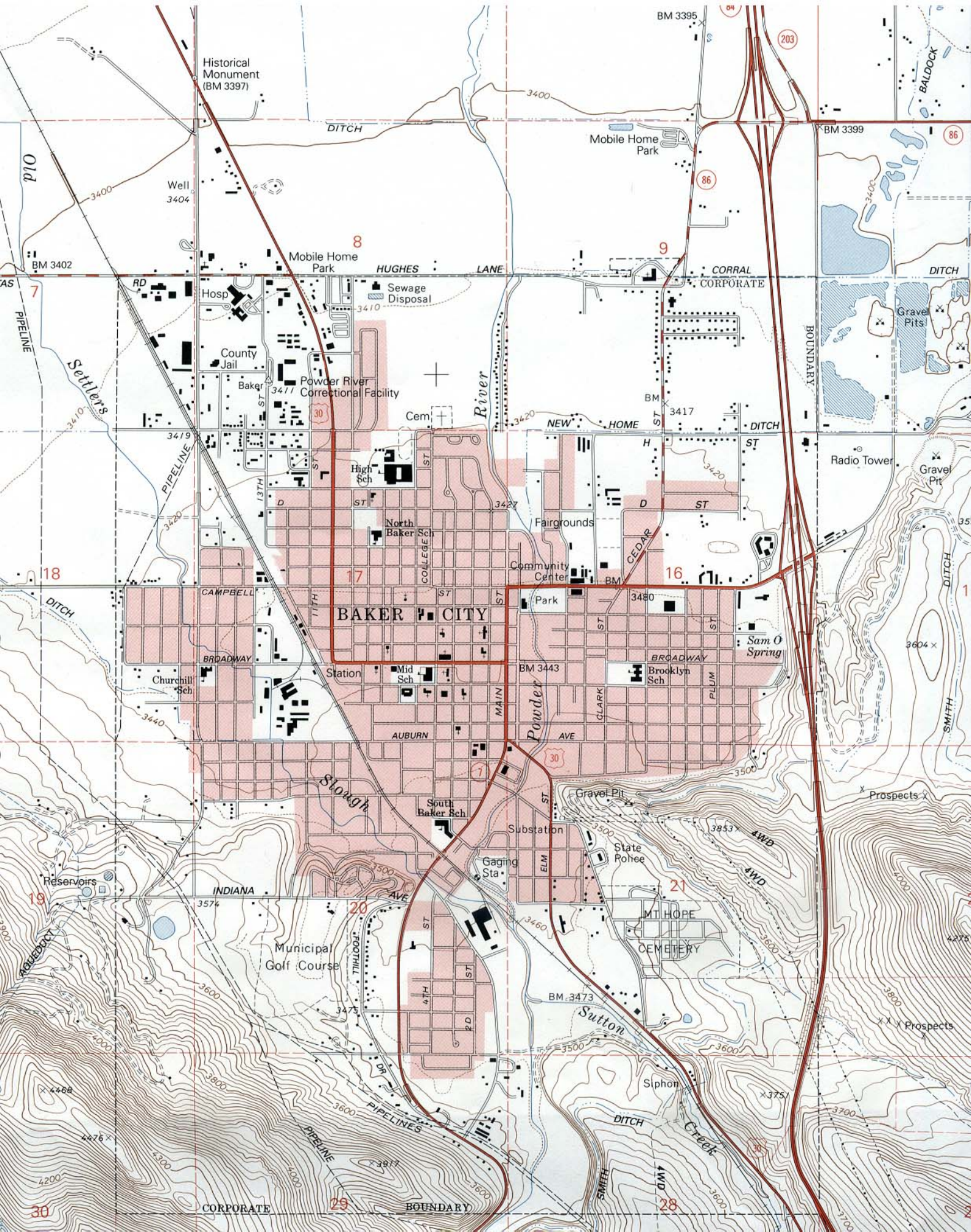
- Participate, or continue to participate, in the NOAA Storm Ready Program.

Multi-Hazard:

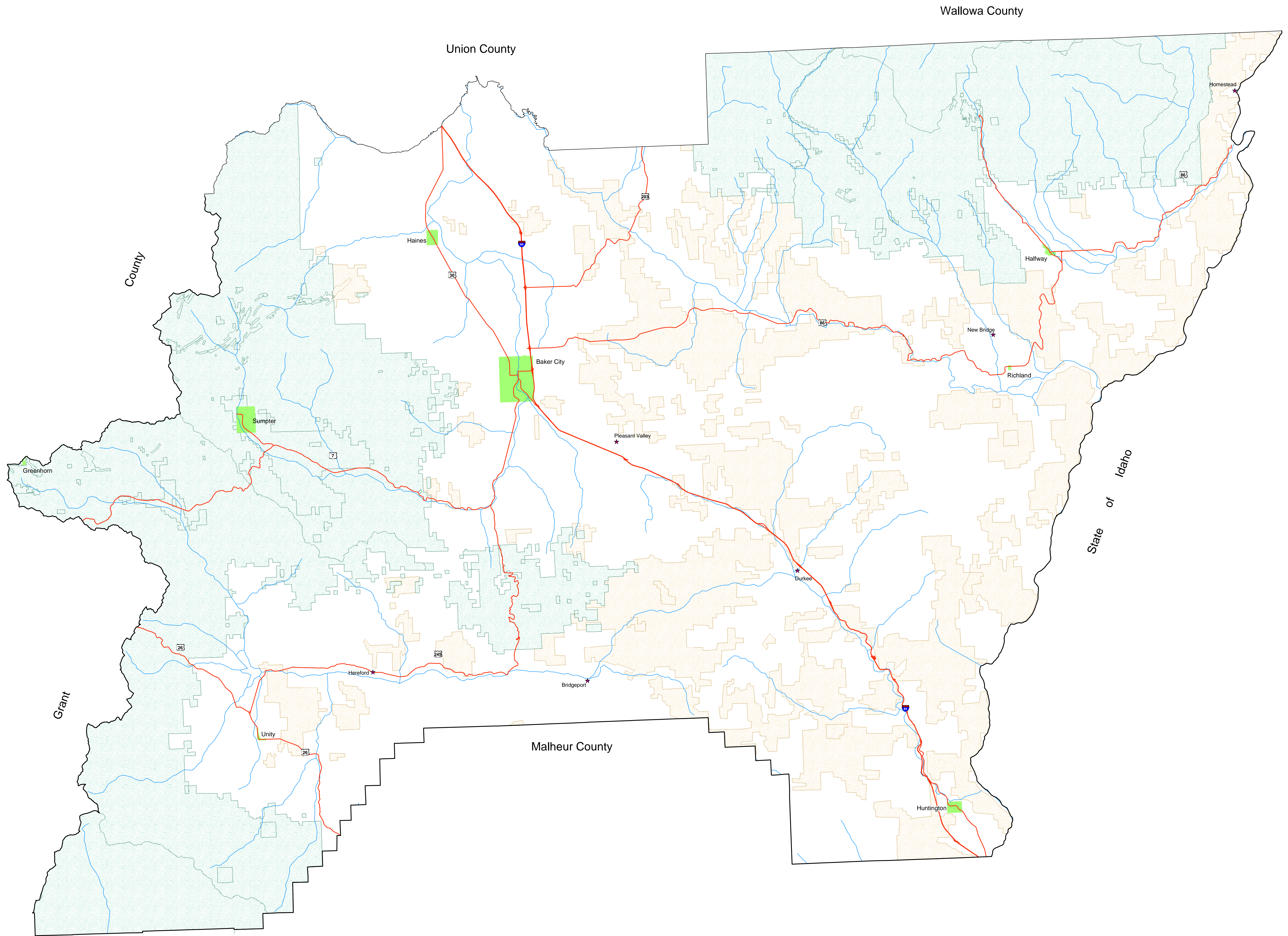
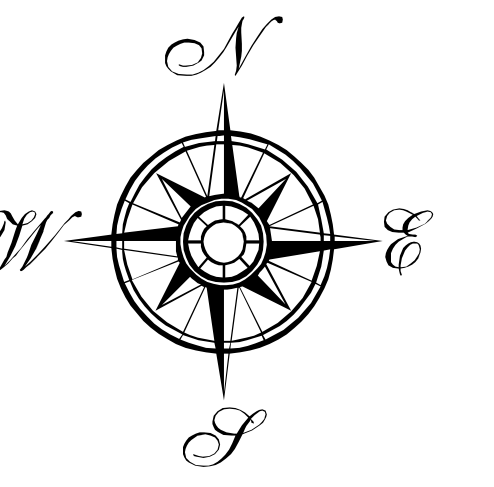
- Develop a warning and emergency/evacuation protocol for vulnerable populations.
- Develop and implement education and outreach programs to increase public awareness of the risk associated with natural hazards. Specifically target vulnerable populations.

Local Adoption

The City of Baker City Addendum will be adopted by City Council via resolution once the regional plan and addendum have been pre-approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

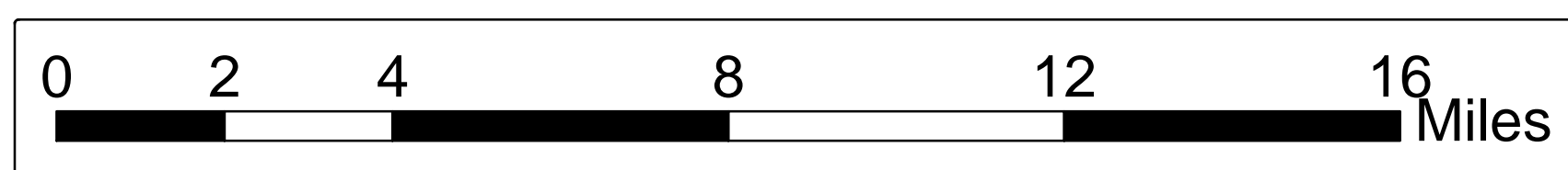


Baker County



Legend

- ★ Unincorporated Areas
- Highways
- Creeks & Rivers
- City Limits
- Forest Service Lands
- BLM Lands



The information on this map was derived from various public data sources. Care was taken in the creation of this map but it is provided "as is". Wallowa County cannot accept any responsibility for errors, omissions, or positional accuracy in the digital data or the underlying records. There are no warranties express or implied, including the merchantability or fitness for a particular purpose, accompanying this product.