



# **WEBSTER COUNTY**

## **2026-2031 HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN**



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## Chapter One: Introduction to the Planning Process

Table 1.1 is a brief description of each section and a summary of the changes made. Details are to be provided in subsequent sections.

**Table 1.1: Overview of Updates to Chapter 1**

| Chapter One Section                               | Updates to Section                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|---------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Purpose & Authority                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Updated Language</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Local Methodology & Process                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Significant text and formatting revisions</li><li>• Added organization tables.</li><li>• Added subheadings.</li><li>• Revised members of planning committee.</li><li>• Revised meeting dates.</li></ul>                  |
| Organization, Plan Reviews, and Plan Revisions    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Significant text and formatting revisions</li><li>• Added table illustrating local plans that were reviewed and incorporated (information previously included in the Local Methodology &amp; Process section).</li></ul> |
| Local Hazard, Risk and Vulnerability              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Significant text and formatting revisions</li><li>• Updated the number of natural and technological hazards included in the plan.</li></ul>                                                                              |
| Multi-Jurisdiction Considerations                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Added tables notated plans consulted.</li><li>• Updated Language</li></ul>                                                                                                                                               |
| Adoption, Implementation, Monitoring & Evaluation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No Change</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                      |

### PURPOSE & AUTHORITY

This document is the official plan update to the previous 2026 Webster County Hazard Mitigation Plan Update, as approved by the Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act authorize the release of federal financial assistance to communities that have experienced a disaster and have been declared a disaster area by the president of the United States. With the amended Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, starting November 1, 2004, it is not enough for local governments to receive a presidential disaster declaration, but they must have prepared and adopted a federally approved Hazard mitigation plan to be eligible for federal financial disaster assistance. Thus, counties across the nation are required to create a Hazard Mitigation Plan to address the community's vulnerability to hazards prior to a disaster event. The document was completed as a joint effort, as is the update that follows; therefore, from this point forward, these entities will be referred to in this report simply as Webster County unless the incorporated portion of the county are being discussed.)

The mitigation planning regulation at §201.6(d) (3) states:

“A local jurisdiction must review and revise its plan to reflect changes in development, progress in local mitigation efforts, and changes in priorities, and resubmit it for approval within five (5) years in order to continue to be eligible for mitigation project grant funding.”

Thus, as a requirement of the regulations above, local Mitigation Plans must be updated and resubmitted to FEMA for approval every five (5) years to continue eligibility for FEMA hazard mitigation assistance programs. Plan updates must demonstrate that progress has been made in the past 5 years for Local Mitigation Plans to fulfill commitments outlined in the previously approved plan. This involves a comprehensive review and update of each section of the Local Mitigation Plan, and a discussion of the results of evaluation and monitoring activities detailed in the Plan Maintenance section of the previously approved plan. Plan updates may validate the information in the 4 previously approved plan or may involve a major plan rewrite. A plan update is NOT an annex to the previously approved plan; it stands on its own as a complete and current plan.

This Plan is a direct result of research and a planning and public involvement process undertaken by the local government officials and citizens of Webster County after they formed the Webster County Hazard Mitigation Plan Update Committee. This Plan is the result of their commitment to reduce the risks of natural hazards and the effects of those natural hazards to their communities.

Authority for the development of this Plan was given by the Webster County Commission because of their execution of the Grantee-Subgrantee Agreement for the Webster County Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Planning Project through their participation in the planning project.

## **LOCAL METHODOLOGY & PROCESS**

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The Unified Government of Webster County Hazard Mitigation Committee has been appointed by the Webster County Board of Commissioners to develop this Hazard Mitigation Plan in conjunction with the Webster County Emergency Management Agency. Additionally, representatives from various community agencies get an invite and participate in the planning process. Organizations include Webster County Family Connection, the Webster County Health Department, and the Webster County Department of Family and Children's Service (DFCS). The River Valley Regional Commission (RVRC) facilitated the planning process, assisted the committee in their collection of data, research, and analysis, attended the committee meetings, facilitated the public hearings, helped with the compilation of the map data, and developed the written document.

To promote widespread public awareness and encourage community participation, four outreach methods were employed: distributing flyers and posters, posting information on local government websites, publishing notices in local newspapers, and utilizing the RVRC public access website, which provides live updates to the plan. Flyers and posters were displayed in prominent community locations such as the library and on social media.

The kick-off meeting was advertised on for February 19, 2026, in the local newspaper and scheduled for March 10, 2026. Flyers, posters, and digital notices were distributed to engage the community, stakeholders, elected officials, etc. to encourage participation. Additionally, RVRC staff spoke to the Webster County Board of Commissioners to notify them of the kick-off meeting. During kick-off meeting participants received an overview of the Hazard Mitigation Plan, FEMA planning requirements, and the update process. A project timeline outlining milestones and accountability measures was presented and shared. Fourteen representatives attended the meeting, including members of the Webster County Board of Commissioners, EMA, Water Authority, and more (see Appendix E: Sign-In Sheets and Labor Match).

Following the kick-off meeting, eight additional working sessions were held at the Webster County Commissioner's Office. Each session lasted approximately one hour to an hour and a half and involved reviews of the existing mitigation plan and discussions of newly added hazards to the plan. Participants recorded comments, suggested revisions, and provided additional information about hazardous events. Absentees were also permitted to review

the RVRC’s public access website to review the meeting materials and submit written comments via. All comments and recommendations received were reviewed and incorporated into the updated plan, where appropriate.

The full committee met from March 2026 through October 2026. Due to the workable size of the full committee, it is not necessary to create subcommittees. The Hazard Mitigation Executive Committee consisted of the chief appointed officials of the county, county staff, and the Director of the Emergency Management Agency. This committee has been responsible for the mission and vision, for reviewing the input from the key players, and will be responsible for the implementation of the plan. This committee has also profiled the hazards, identified critical facilities and their exposure to hazards, and developed mitigation strategies.

Additionally, a meeting was held on August 27, 2026, with Family Connections to discuss the plan and hazard mitigation strategies for socially vulnerable populations within the county. The forum provided an additional opportunity to share information about hazard mitigation, discuss available resources within the county for vulnerable populations, such as children and families, after a disaster, and gather public feedback during the plan review process. Additional review meetings were also held with the local Webster County Fire Department to invite public safety input on the final draft on September XX, September XX, and October XXX.

The final public hearing was advertised on October 1, 2026, in the local newspaper and scheduled for October 13, 2026. Flyers, emails, and digital notices were distributed to engage the community, stakeholders, elected officials, etc. to encourage participation. During this meeting, participants conducted a final review of the document, and it was adopted by the Board of Commissioners, pending approval by GEMA and FEMA.

## Hazard Mitigation Plan Update Committee Meeting Participants

Most plan contributors are identified below. All the participants fit into one of the five FEMA-recognized stakeholder categories. All participants were contact through email, phone, and meeting invites. See Appendix C for ads, invites, and email chains.

Sign-in sheets and labor documentation sheets were kept verifying that the community met the 25% local match from planning dollars awarded by GEMA. Copies of the sign-in sheets, meeting agendas and minutes can be found in Appendix C. Due to the personal salary information, labor documentation sheets are not included in this document, but are being maintained on file by the Webster County EMA Director for no less than three years from the date of approval, for audit purposes.

**Table 1.2: Hazard Mitigation Plan Participants**

| Name                                                         | Organization                          | Title                                 |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Agencies with authority to regulate: Local Government</b> |                                       |                                       |
| Darrell Holbrook                                             | Webster County Board of Commissioners | Chair                                 |
| Jack Holbrook                                                | Webster County Board of Commissioners | Commissioner                          |
| Melvin Crimes                                                | Webster County Board of Commissioners | Commissioner                          |
| Darryl Jones                                                 | Webster County Board of Commissioners | Commissioner                          |
| David Ingram                                                 | Webster County Board of Commissioners | Commissioner                          |
| Bonnie Kay Witt                                              | Webster County Board of Commissioners | County Clerk                          |
| Chekeidra C. Crimes                                          | Webster Court Superior Court          | Clerk of Superior Court               |
| <b>Local and Regional Agencies: Public Safety</b>            |                                       |                                       |
| Scott Hudson                                                 | Public Works Department               | Utility Director                      |
| Cody Brown                                                   | Fire Department                       | EMA Director/ Fire Chief              |
| Jayson Everett                                               | Fire Department                       | Deputy Fire Chief/Deputy EMA Director |

|                                                                               |                                   |                                        |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Donald Brown                                                                  | Fire Department                   | Preston Fire District Chief            |
| Phillip Jones                                                                 | Fire Department                   | Weston Fire District Chief             |
| Darryl Jones                                                                  | Fire Department                   | Centerpoint District Fire Chief        |
| Ronald Brown                                                                  | Fire Department                   | Bankston/Goodhope District Fire Chief  |
| Glenn Cobb                                                                    | Fire Department                   | Seminole District Fire Chief           |
| Austin Blankenship                                                            | Fire Department/ Sheriff's Office | Volunteer Firefighter                  |
| Randy Dely                                                                    | Webster County Sheriff's Office   | Sheriff                                |
| Will Rodgers                                                                  | Webster County Sheriff's Office   | Chief Deputy                           |
| Wilson Shattles                                                               | Webster County Sheriff's Office   | Deputy                                 |
| Daniel Weeks                                                                  | Webster County Sheriff's Office   | Deputy                                 |
| Mandy Cook                                                                    | Emergency Services                | EMS Director                           |
| <b>Non-profit organizations: Health Care &amp; Emergency Medical Services</b> |                                   |                                        |
| Haley Dobbs                                                                   | Webster County Health Department  | Nurse                                  |
| Brenda Lane                                                                   | Webster County Health Department  | Admin                                  |
| Nikki Brayant                                                                 | Preston Family Medicine           | Owner                                  |
| <b>Representatives of business and academia: Education</b>                    |                                   |                                        |
| Braxton Crews                                                                 | Webster County 4-H                | County Extension Coordinator           |
| Marc Maynor                                                                   | Webster County Schools            | Superintendent                         |
| <b>Representatives of business and academia: Employers/Utilities</b>          |                                   |                                        |
| Tanya Doran                                                                   | Golden Triangle                   |                                        |
| Julie Shutters                                                                | Golden Triangle                   | Implementation Manager                 |
| Rhonda Gordon                                                                 | Golden Triangle                   |                                        |
| <b>Non-profit organizations: Social Services</b>                              |                                   |                                        |
| Diane Wills                                                                   | Webster County Family Connection  | Executive Director                     |
| Rachel Speegle                                                                | Webster County Family Connection  | Chairperson                            |
| Kendra Yarbrough                                                              | Webster County DFCS               | Director                               |
| Jayne Yarbrough                                                               | Webster County DFCS               |                                        |
| <b>Neighboring Communities: EMA Directors Surrounding Counties</b>            |                                   |                                        |
| Greg Stewart                                                                  | Stewart County                    | EMA Director                           |
| Marlon Coleman Sr.                                                            | Randolph County                   | Fire Rescue, Fire Chief                |
| Sam Schiro                                                                    | Marion County                     | EMA Director                           |
| Jerry Harmon                                                                  | Sumter County                     | EMA Director                           |
| James Hamby                                                                   | Terrell County                    | EMA Director                           |
| <b>Local and Regional Agencies: GEMA</b>                                      |                                   |                                        |
| Alan White                                                                    | Georgia Forestry Commission       | County Chief Ranger                    |
| Johnny Williams                                                               | American Red Cross                | Executive Director                     |
| Carla Penny                                                                   | Sumter EMC                        | Community Relations Specialist         |
| Dareion Smith                                                                 | GA Department of Public Health    | Emergency Preparedness Specialist      |
| Jack Lockwood                                                                 | GA Department of Public Health    | Public Health Consultant               |
| Cindy Wisham                                                                  | United Way SWGA                   | Interim President                      |
| Mark Johnson                                                                  | United Way SWGA                   | Board Chair                            |
| Cindy Puryear                                                                 | Salvation Army                    |                                        |
| Niki Cadenhead                                                                | Diverse Power                     | Director of Marketing & Communications |
| Lequeshia Mincey                                                              | SWGA                              | Regional E-911 Director                |
| Mandy Juarez                                                                  | GEMA/HS Area 4                    | Emergency Management Field Coordinator |
| Keith Nichols                                                                 | Georgia Power                     | Area Manager                           |

# Hazard Mitigation Plan Update Committee Meeting Meetings

The Committee held the following meetings, the sign-in sheets of which are included in Appendix C:

|                   |                                                       |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| March 10,2026     | Kick-off Meeting                                      |
| April 14, 2026    | Hazard Identification and Prioritization              |
| May 12, 2026      | Review and Update Mitigation Strategies               |
| June 9, 2026      | New Natural Hazard Mitigation Action Strategies       |
| July 14, 2026     | New Technological Hazard Mitigation Action Strategies |
| August 11, 2026   | Capabilities Assessment                               |
| August 27, 2026   | Hazard Mitigation for Vulnerable populations          |
| September 8, 2026 | Plan Implementation                                   |
| October 13, 2026  | Final Public Hearing                                  |

## ORGANIZATION AND PLAN REVIEWS

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### Plan Organization

The plan updated was completed in nine months with plan adoption by resolution by each jurisdiction. In Chapter 2, seven natural hazards are analyzed in detail, including a description of the hazard, the potential damage, the frequency of occurrence in the past, and the probability of future events. The description is followed by an inventory of assets exposed to the hazard, and an estimate of potential losses that could be expected. Also land use and development trends are being identified in their relation to hazard, and multijurisdictional differences are identified. Chapter 3 addresses five technological hazards in the same manner as the natural hazards in Chapter 2. The following two chapters, 4 and 5, present the local mitigation goals and objectives for both natural and technological hazards, respectively. These chapters list mitigation options, existing policies, community values, and identifies mitigation strategies, including tasks and action steps, and recommendations to mitigate adverse impacts of hazard events. The execution of the plan is outlined in Chapter 6, addressing the implementation, evaluation, update, and maintenance of the plan. The document finishes with a concluding summary, in Chapter 7, followed by appendices as supporting documentation.

### Plan Reviews

In March 2026, the planning team convened, consisting of department heads and personnel representing Webster County. The team began reviewing the existing plan and analyzing its contents. Each section was carefully evaluated to determine whether the information remained valid or required updates. The Local Hazard, Risk, and Vulnerability section was thoroughly examined to identify the primary disasters affecting Webster County. The review confirmed that thunderstorms and tornadoes pose the greatest threats to the county. Extreme Heat was recommended for inclusion among the listed natural disasters and have been combined with Severe Winter Storm, which was in the previous plan, into an Extreme Temperatures. Additionally, Wildfire was added. Emergent Infectious Disease was added to non-natural hazards due to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, while Infrastructure Failure was added due to the erosion of roads and water and sewer infrastructure failures.

The goals and objectives were reviewed to determine whether revisions were necessary and, if so, to what extent. The objectives and associated tasks were evaluated using the following criteria:

- Is the objective or task still in line with the goals?
- Are the objectives and tasks appropriate for accomplishing the goal?

- Is the objective still something the county wishes to pursue?

No changes were made to the Plan Maintenance section, as it was determined that the section was effective and reflected the community's capabilities to maintain the plan. The following plans were also reviewed by RVRC staff and taken into consideration.

**Table 1.3: Planning Resource Review**

| Existing documents review                  | Reviewed? Yes/No | Methods of use into Mitigation Plan                                                                                                                            |
|--------------------------------------------|------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Comprehensive Plan                         | ✓                | To understand the demographic dynamics of Webster County, local goals, objectives, initiatives, and concerns.                                                  |
| Wildfire Risk Wildfire Protection Plan     | ✓                | Identify those wildfire risks to homeowners and communities of Webster County                                                                                  |
| Webster County's Emergency Operations Plan | ✓                | Highlight and provide supporting knowledge of the plan of action and coordination between Webster County for shared services and emergency response.           |
| FEMA Flood Insurance Study                 | ✓                | In accordance with the National Flood Inventory Program (NFIP), assess flooding conditions, location, and potential severity.                                  |
| Hazard Risk Analyses Supplement (HAZUS)    | ✓                | Predict and estimate risk losses from floods, hurricanes, earthquakes, and other related events, and measure the impact of mitigative actions to these events. |

## LOCAL HAZARD, RISK AND VULNERABILITY

In this plan, seven natural hazards and five technological hazards are identified and evaluated in their potential impact on Webster County. The purpose of this hazard, risk and vulnerability assessment is to understand how vulnerable Webster County is to each hazard, and how the exposure to the hazard can be reduced. By identifying the nature of each hazard, past events, the frequency of occurrence, and the estimated probability of a future event to take place, a profile is developed for each hazard. The most threatening natural hazards in Webster County, as identified by the committee, are thunderstorms, hurricanes and tropical storms, tornadoes, wildfires, as well as floods. Although they are less likely, even droughts have been analyzed. Five technological hazards have been identified by the committee, the most threatening being hazardous materials incidents released in both fixed and in transportation accidents. To a lesser degree, Webster County might be exposed to dam failure, and a nuclear power plant accident.

The next step is to identify critical facilities, ranging from buildings to infrastructure, and assess if they are in hazard prone or susceptible areas. Should these facilities ever be damaged, potential losses could be expected, and an estimate is made at this time. Critical facilities are essential to the community because their functions and services are important to the health and welfare of the population. Included are facilities for public safety, for emergency response, and facilities with disaster recovery functions.

To assess and reduce the risk of exposing facilities to hazards, land use and development trends in Webster County are reviewed. Mitigation options become apparent and can be considered in future land use decisions.

## MULTI-JURISDICTION CONSIDERATIONS

This Hazard Mitigation Plan has been developed for the Unified Government of Webster County. Where applicable, specific mitigation actions needed to reduce the adverse impacts of specific hazards have been identified for each jurisdiction. The mitigation goals are similar for all entities. In the tables below, note which capabilities apply.

**Table 1.4: Planning And Regulatory**

| Capability Type                          | In Place | Notes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|------------------------------------------|----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Plans                                    |          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Community Wildfire Protection Plan       | Yes      | Last Updated 2018 by the GA Forestry Commission                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Comprehensive/Master Plan                | Yes      | In process of updating 2027 plan for all local governments with the assistance of RVRC.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Economic Development Plan                | Yes      | The regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Land Use Plan                            | Yes      | Within Webster County Comprehensive Plan                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Local Emergency Operations Plan          | Yes      | Completed by local EMA in 2015; revised 2015                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Transportation Plan                      | No       | Although traffic counts and crash data are available for each local government through GDOT.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Planning and Ordinances                  |          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Building code                            | No       | No county-specific zoning codes; utilize the State building codes. Building codes and regulations are standards and guidelines that establish minimum requirements for building design, construction, and maintenance. These standards, at minimum, were established and mandatory codes as adopted by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs. The International Building Code, 2018 edition, with Georgia Amendments in 2020 and 2022, served as the minimum standard codes for construction and safety. |
| Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) | No       | Utilizes a volunteer firefighter department                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Flood insurance rate maps                | Yes      | FIRM adopted 08/18/09                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Floodplain ordinance                     | Yes      | Webster County's flood damage prevention ordinance was adopted on 8/11/2009                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Substantial Damage Plan                  | Yes      | This can be found within the flood damage prevention ordinance                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Storm Ready                              | Yes      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Subdivision ordinance                    | Yes      | Flooding and roads                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Zoning ordinance                         | No       | No county-specific codes; utilize the State building codes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

**Table 1.5: Administrative and Technical**

| Capability Type          | In Place | Notes                                             |
|--------------------------|----------|---------------------------------------------------|
| Administrative           |          |                                                   |
| Chief Building Official  | Yes      | Utilizes the State Fire Marshall, non-residential |
| Civil Engineer           | No       |                                                   |
| Community Planner        | Yes      | With assistance from the RVRC                     |
| Emergency Manager        | Yes      | Local EMA                                         |
| Floodplain Administrator | No       |                                                   |
| GIS Coordinator          | Yes      | With assistance from the RVRC                     |
| Planning Commission      | No       |                                                   |
| Technical                |          |                                                   |

|                             |     |                               |
|-----------------------------|-----|-------------------------------|
| Grant writing               | Yes | With assistance from the RVRC |
| Hazard data and information | Yes | With assistance from the RVRC |
| GIS analysis                | Yes | With assistance from the RVRC |

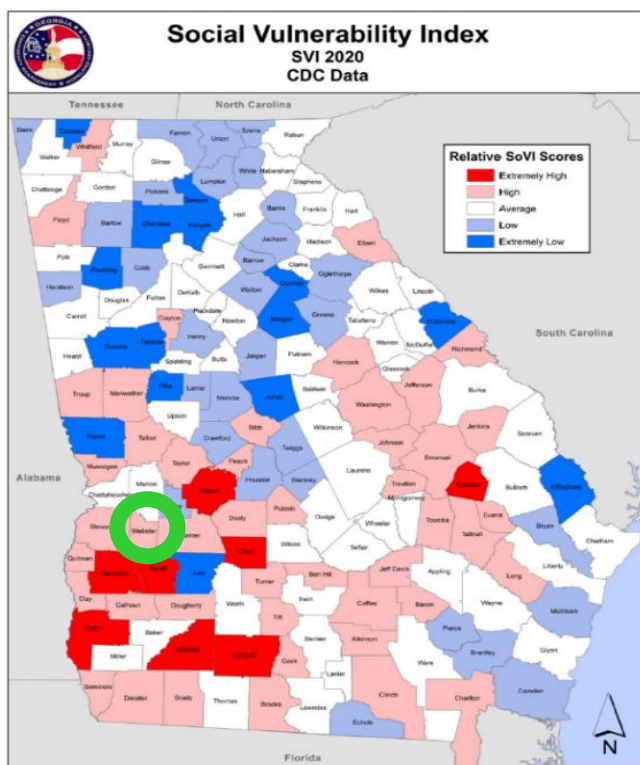
**Table 1.6: Education**

| Capability Type                                                                                                           | In Place | Notes                                                    |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Program/Organization                                                                                                      |          |                                                          |
| Community newsletters                                                                                                     | Yes      | Code Red and E911                                        |
| Hazard awareness campaigns (such as Firewise, Storm Ready, Severe Weather Awareness Week, school programs, public events) | Yes      | Storm Ready, CodeRed, School Messaging System to parents |
| Local news                                                                                                                | Yes      |                                                          |
| Social media                                                                                                              | Yes      | EMA and Sheriff Department social media pages            |

## SOCIAL VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT

Social vulnerability comprises the social, economic, demographic, and housing characteristics that influence a community's ability to respond to, cope with, recover from, and adapt to environmental hazards. The tool used to determine the social vulnerability of each county is the CDC Social Vulnerability Index (SVI), which measures the social vulnerability of U.S. counties to environmental hazards. The index shows where there is uneven capacity for preparedness and response and where resources might be used most effectively to reduce vulnerability. Social vulnerability is also useful as an indicator in determining each county's different capabilities to recover from disasters. According to the Map below, Webster County has a high SVI Score.

**Map 1.1.: Social Vulnerability Index 2020**



## **ADOPTION, IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING & EVALUATION**

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Since the completion of the document, GEMA reviewed the plan to ascertain that it complies with federal regulations. A second public hearing was held on October 13, 2026. After the official GEMA approval on **Month/Day/Year**, the Webster County Hazard Mitigation Plan was formally adopted by the Unified Government of Webster County Board of Commissioners on **Month/Day/Year**, and respectively, and subsequently submitted to GEMA and FEMA. Please refer to the adoption resolution on page 2. A system for the implementation, evaluations, updating, and maintenance of the plan is set out in Chapter 6 of this plan. Once the plan has been implemented, it will have to be evaluated frequently by the EMA Director and an assigned committee and updated if necessary. This will ensure that the Unified Government of Webster County always has a compliant mitigation plan in place.

## Chapter Two: Local Natural Hazard, Risk & Vulnerability (HRV)

Table 2.0 is a brief description of each chapter section and a summary of the changes made.

**Table 2.0: Updates to Section**

| Chapter Two Section                                         | Updates to Section                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Thunderstorm<br>(lightening,<br>thunderstorm wind,<br>hail) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Format Change</li> <li>• Update Language/language.</li> <li>• Previously titled “Windstorm (Thunderstorm Winds”</li> <li>• Noted extent of hazard in Webster County</li> </ul>                                                  |
| Hurricane/Tropical<br>Storm                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Format Change</li> <li>• Update Language/language.</li> <li>• Added hurricane data, text, and maps from the 2026 HAZUS.</li> <li>• Noted extent of hazard in Webster County</li> </ul>                                          |
| Tornado                                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Format Change</li> <li>• Update Language/language.</li> <li>• Combined with Hailstorm section</li> <li>• Added tornado data, text, and maps from the 2026 HAZUS.</li> <li>• Noted extent of hazard in Webster County</li> </ul> |
| Inland Flooding                                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Format Change</li> <li>• Update Language/language.</li> <li>• Previously titled “Flood”</li> <li>• Added flood data, text, and maps from the 2026 HAZUS.</li> <li>• Noted extent of hazard in Webster County</li> </ul>         |
| Drought                                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Format Change</li> <li>• Update Language/language.</li> <li>• Noted extent of hazard in Webster County</li> </ul>                                                                                                               |
| Extreme Temperatures<br>(NEW)                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Section</li> <li>• Combined with Severe Winter Storms</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                            |
| Wildfire (NEW)                                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New section</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                          |

## THUNDERSTORMS (LIGHTENING, THUNDERSTORM WIND, HAIL)

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### Hazard Description



Isolated Thunderstorms tend to form where there is abundant moisture at low and middle levels of the atmosphere, and when there is a force that can lift warm air, such as a warm or cold front, a sea breeze, or a mountain. The warm air is forced to rise rapidly. Thunderstorms can develop isolated, in clusters or in lines. A single thunderstorm can affect a certain location for an extended time, and cause some of the most severe weather; or several thunderstorms can affect that location over a few hours. Thunderstorm winds generally move in a straight line, and not in a rotating air column like tornadoes. The winds are normally short-lived and can come in gusts over 50 miles per hour fast.

All thunderstorms contain lightning, which is another hazard. The precipitation they bring most often is in form of heavy rain that can cause flash flooding but can also be in the form of hail. Tornadoes can be caused by thunderstorms as a spin-off as well.

### ***Lightning***

Lightning occurs when the difference between the positive and negative charges of the upper layers of the cloud and the earth's surface becomes great enough to overcome the resistance of the insulating air. The current flows along the forced conductive path to the surface (in cloud to ground lightning) and reaches up to 100 million volts of electrical potential. In Georgia, lightning strikes peak in July, with June and August being second highest in occurrence.

### ***Hail***

Hail is a type of precipitation formed during turbulence within a cloud, often during thunderstorm events. Rising currents of air carrying water droplets high into the upper reaches of thunderstorms, where they freeze. Frozen water droplets continue to collide with other water droplets, growing. The hail falls when the thunderstorm's updraft can no longer support the weight of the hailstone, which can occur if the stone becomes large enough or the updraft weakens. Hailstones range in size from a pea to a grapefruit and are typically spherical. Hailstorms can damage crops, automobiles, aircraft, and other structures. Hail Stones can vary in diameter, and in Georgia, hail up to 2.75 inches has been recorded.

## Hazard Profile

A severe thunderstorm is a thunderstorm with winds 90 km/h (55 mph) or greater, 2 cm (3/4 inch) or larger hail, funnel clouds, or tornadoes. These storms may contain frequent clouds to ground lightning and heavy downpours which can lead to localized flooding. An otherwise weak thunderstorm which produces a wind gust of the required strength would be defined as 'severe' whereas a very violent thunderstorm with continuous lightning and very heavy rain (but without the required wind gusts, hail, or tornado/funnel clouds) would not be defined as severe. Many of the violent local thunderstorms which may occur frequently during the summer months in Webster County would not be defined as severe.

All four quadrants of the community have experienced thunderstorm winds. Although there have not been any such hazards of disastrous proportions locally, historically, it is the most common natural hazard to befall the community. Examples of local damage include forests, trees blown onto homes, commercial establishments, and power lines, as well as roofs torn from buildings. These are all typical of (local) Wind Zone 2 where gusts of 90-99 mph may occur. The historic record was compiled by the National Climatic Data Center documents forty-three significant thunderstorm wind events between 1981 and 2025. No local deaths or injuries have been documented because of these events. Cumulative damage documented to date total \$322,150. Extrapolating from seventy years of available data, the community has a 56.58% probability of experiencing thunderstorm winds any given year (Hazard Frequency Table- Appendix A).

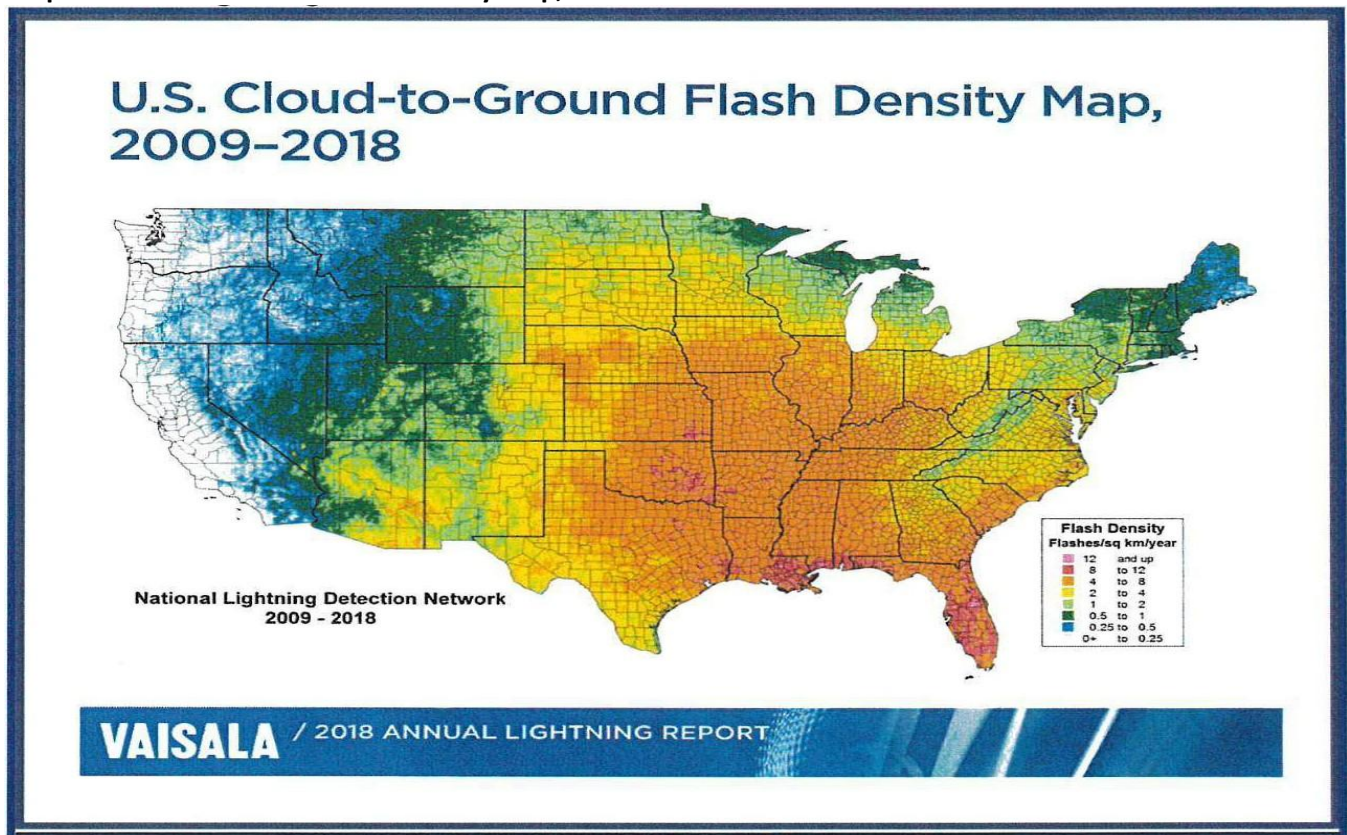
**Table 2.1: Webster County Thunderstorm Events 1950-2026**

| Location       | Date       | Time | Type      | Mag. | Deaths | Injuries | Property | Crop |
|----------------|------------|------|-----------|------|--------|----------|----------|------|
| Webster (Zone) | 3/18/1981  | 1145 | Tstm Wind | 0    | 0      | 0        | 0        | 0    |
| Webster (Zone) | 4/5/1985   | 2020 | Tstm Wind | 0    | 0      | 0        | 0        | 0    |
| Webster (Zone) | 7/21/1986  | 1430 | Tstm Wind | 0    | 0      | 0        | 0        | 0    |
| Webster (Zone) | 11/15/1989 | 2110 | Tstm Wind | 0    | 0      | 0        | 0        | 0    |
| Webster (Zone) | 11/16/1989 | 30   | Tstm Wind | 0    | 0      | 0        | 0        | 0    |
| Webster (Zone) | 2/9/1990   | 500  | Tstm Wind | 0    | 0      | 0        | 0        | 0    |
| Webster (Zone) | 2/16/1990  | 1135 | Tstm Wind | 0    | 0      | 0        | 0        | 0    |
| Webster (Zone) | 4/10/1990  | 1600 | Tstm Wind | 0    | 0      | 0        | 0        | 0    |
| Webster (Zone) | 4/9/1991   | 1620 | Tstm Wind | 0    | 0      | 0        | 0        | 0    |
| Webster (Zone) | 4/9/1991   | 1945 | Tstm Wind | 0    | 0      | 0        | 0        | 0    |
| Webster (Zone) | 3/30/1992  | 1520 | Tstm Wind | 0    | 0      | 0        | 0        | 0    |
| Webster (Zone) | 7/13/1992  | 1300 | Tstm Wind | 0    | 0      | 0        | 0        | 0    |
| Webster (Zone) | 3/26/1993  | 1700 | Tstm Wind | 0    | 0      | 0        | 500      | 0    |
| Webster (Zone) | 6/29/1994  | 1530 | Tstm Wind | 0    | 0      | 0        | 5000     | 0    |
| Webster (Zone) | 1/6/1995   | 2100 | Tstm Wind | 0    | 0      | 0        | 100      | 0    |
| Webster (Zone) | 3/6/1996   | 830  | Tstm Wind |      | 0      | 0        | 300      | 0    |
| Webster (Zone) | 4/27/1997  | 1630 | Tstm Wind |      | 0      | 0        | 50000    | 0    |
| Webster (Zone) | 7/27/1997  | 2100 | Tstm Wind |      | 0      | 0        | 2000     | 0    |
| Webster (Zone) | 11/21/1997 | 2055 | Tstm Wind |      | 0      | 0        | 5000     | 0    |
| Webster (Zone) | 5/22/2001  | 1255 | Tstm Wind |      | 0      | 0        | 1000     | 0    |
| Webster (Zone) | 11/25/2001 | 230  | Tstm Wind |      | 0      | 0        | 500      | 0    |
| Webster (Zone) | 3/13/2003  | 1835 | Tstm Wind | 50   | 0      | 0        | 2000     | 0    |
| Webster (Zone) | 5/2/2003   | 2140 | Tstm Wind | 50   | 0      | 0        | 3000     | 0    |
| Webster (Zone) | 3/27/2005  | 430  | Tstm Wind | 50   | 0      | 0        | 1000     | 0    |

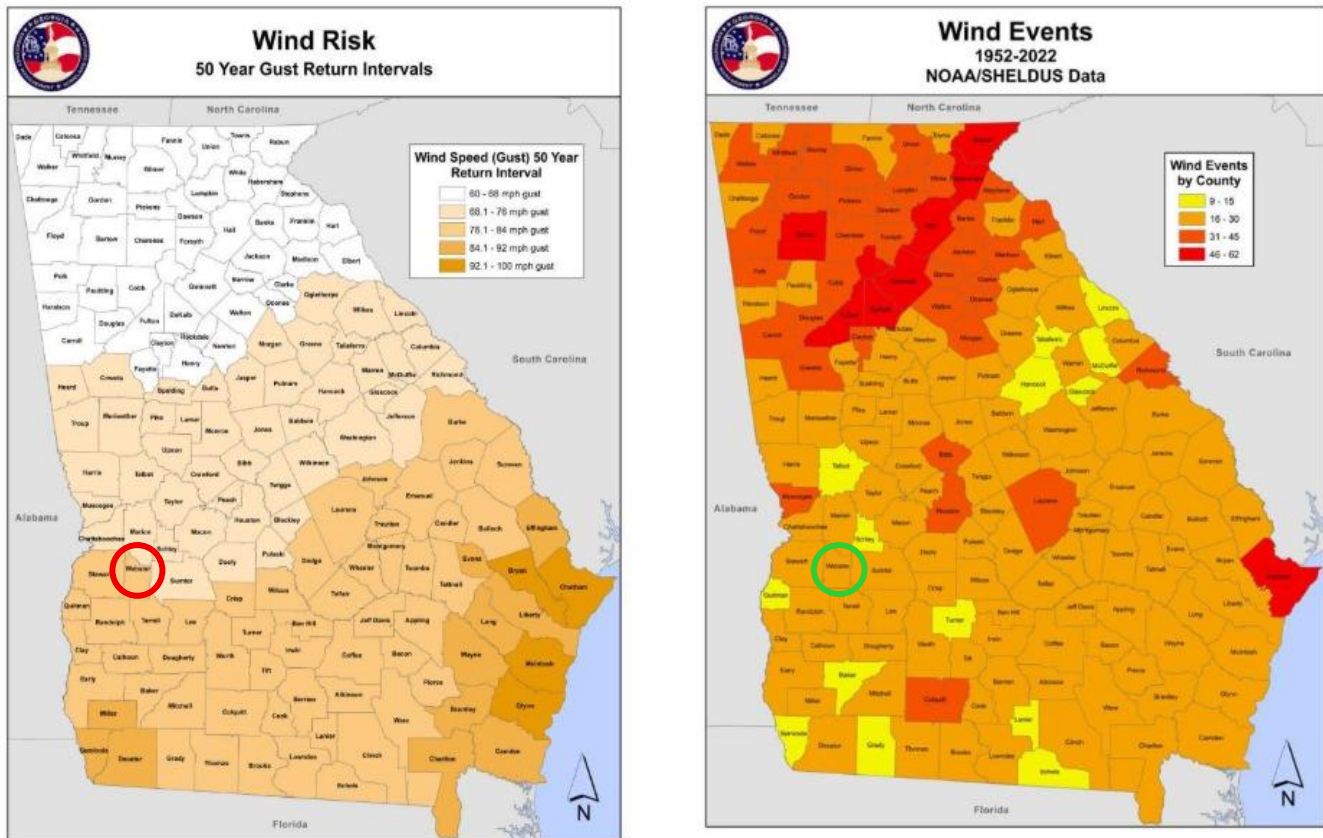
|                |           |      |           |    |   |   |        |   |
|----------------|-----------|------|-----------|----|---|---|--------|---|
| Webster (Zone) | 5/10/2006 | 1704 | Tstm Wind | 52 | 0 | 0 | 7000   | 0 |
| Webster (Zone) | 3/1/2007  | 1607 | Tstm Wind | 50 | 0 | 0 | 3000   | 0 |
| Webster (Zone) | 8/17/2007 | 1730 | Tstm Wind | 50 | 0 | 0 | 3000   | 0 |
| Webster (Zone) | 2/17/2008 | 1826 | Tstm Wind | 53 | 0 | 0 | 55000  | 0 |
| Webster (Zone) | 4/4/2011  | 2358 | Tstm Wind | 50 | 0 | 0 | 2000   | 0 |
| Webster (Zone) | 4/19/2015 | 1020 | Tstm Wind | 50 | 0 | 0 | 750    | 0 |
| Webster (Zone) | 6/25/2016 | 1600 | Tstm Wind | 50 | 0 | 0 | 4000   | 0 |
| Webster (Zone) | 7/11/2016 | 1500 | Tstm Wind | 60 | 0 | 0 | 45000  | 0 |
| Webster (Zone) | 1/2/2017  | 1820 | Tstm Wind | 50 | 0 | 0 | 20000  | 0 |
| Webster (Zone) | 5/29/2017 | 1510 | Tstm Wind | 45 | 0 | 0 | 1000   | 0 |
| Webster (Zone) | 7/19/2019 | 1510 | Tstm Wind | 50 | 0 | 0 | 5000   | 0 |
| Webster (Zone) | 5/22/2020 | 1720 | Tstm Wind | 55 | 0 | 0 | 10000  | 0 |
| Webster (Zone) | 6/28/2020 | 1954 | Tstm Wind | 50 | 0 | 0 | 3000   | 0 |
| Webster (Zone) | 6/30/2020 | 1620 | Tstm Wind | 50 | 0 | 0 | 3000   | 0 |
| Webster (Zone) | 5/4/2021  | 2009 | Tstm Wind | 55 | 0 | 0 | 50000  | 0 |
| Webster (Zone) | 6/14/2021 | 1531 | Tstm Wind | 50 | 0 | 0 | 15000  | 0 |
| Webster (Zone) | 7/29/2023 | 1844 | Tstm Wind | 52 | 0 | 0 | 8000   | 0 |
| Webster (Zone) | 8/8/2023  | 1545 | Tstm Wind | 56 | 0 | 0 | 15000  | 0 |
| Webster (Zone) | 5/27/2024 | 1600 | Tstm Wind | 48 | 0 | 0 | 2000   | 0 |
| <b>Total:</b>  |           |      |           |    | 0 | 0 | 322150 | 0 |

Source: National Climatic Data Center; Last entry since 2/6/2026

**Map 2.1: Cloud-to-Ground Flash Density Map, 2009-2018**



**Map 2.2: Georgia Hurricane Wind Risk and Wind events.**



Source: Georgia Hazard Mitigation Strategy 2024

Other side effects of thunderstorms can be lightning and/or hail. In a typical thunderstorm, about two-thirds of all lightning discharges take place within the cloud or from cloud to cloud. When lightning strikes the earth's surface, the damage is caused by the large current flowing in the return stroke, or through the heat generated by this current. Temperatures in a bolt can reach up to 50,000°F in just a split second, and the electrical charge can be as much as 100 million volts. No major lightning strikes occurring in Webster County are listed in the NDCD database. This makes the probability of future occurrences unknown to lightning.

The precipitation originating from shower clouds and thunderstorms can not only be in raindrops but also in the form of pellets of soft hail or hail stones. Hail stones are small balls or lumps usually consisting of concentric layers of clear ice and compact snow, with a diameter of 0.2 to 4 inches. Because the formation of hail usually requires cumulonimbus or other convective clouds with strong updrafts, it often accompanies thunderstorms. Generally, these events are of great intensity and shorter in duration than that from layer clouds. Hail can cause enormous destruction to agriculture, especially. fruit orchards and grain fields. Hail also causes damage to structures, windows, roofs, and vehicles. According to NCDC, Webster County has experienced 20 major hail events since 1950. Table 2 lists the hail occurrences.

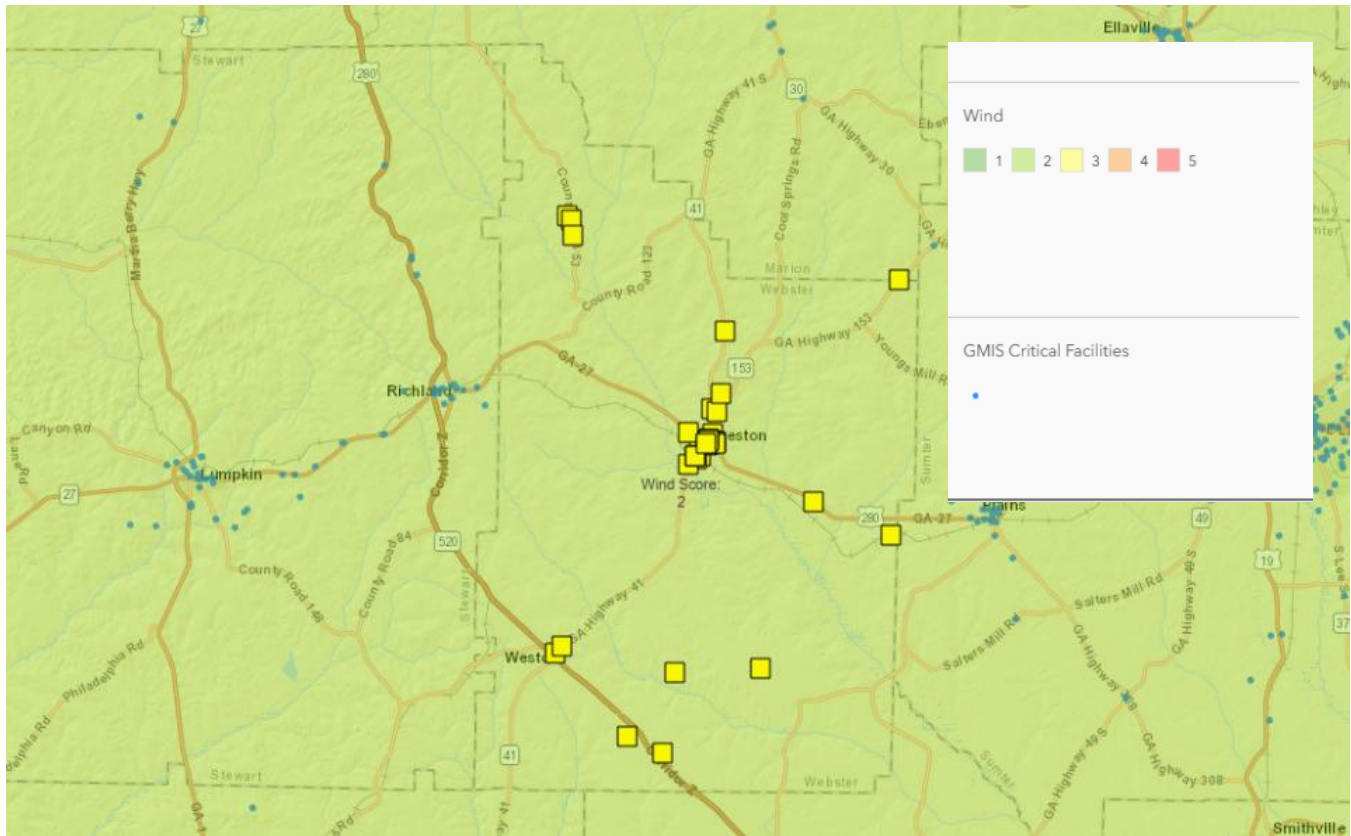
**Table 2.2: Webster County Hail Events 1987-2025**

| Location       | Date       | Time | Type | Magnitude | Deaths | Injuries | Property | Cro |
|----------------|------------|------|------|-----------|--------|----------|----------|-----|
| Webster (Zone) | 3/18/1981  | 1145 | Hail | 1.75      | 0      | 0        | 0        | 0   |
| Webster (Zone) | 4/25/1988  | 1940 | Hail | 1.75      | 0      | 0        | 0        | 0   |
| Webster (Zone) | 3/26/1993  | 1700 | Hail | 0.75      | 0      | 0        | 0        | 0   |
| Webster (Zone) | 1/8/1997   | 1215 | Hail | 0.75      | 0      | 0        | 0        | 0   |
| Webster (Zone) | 5/13/1999  | 1840 | Hail | 1         | 0      | 0        | 0        | 0   |
| Webster (Zone) | 6/25/2000  | 1700 | Hail | 0.75      | 0      | 0        | 0        | 0   |
| Webster (Zone) | 7/6/2002   | 1545 | Hail | 0.88      | 0      | 0        | 0        | 0   |
| Webster (Zone) | 4/25/2003  | 2030 | Hail | 1.75      | 0      | 0        | 0        | 0   |
| Webster (Zone) | 3/27/2005  | 500  | Hail | 0.75      | 0      | 0        | 0        | 0   |
| Webster (Zone) | 4/30/2005  | 915  | Hail | 0.75      | 0      | 0        | 0        | 0   |
| Webster (Zone) | 12/28/2005 | 1500 | Hail | 1.75      | 0      | 0        | 2500     | 0   |
| Webster (Zone) | 1/2/2006   | 1150 | Hail | 0.75      | 0      | 0        | 0        | 0   |
| Webster (Zone) | 8/17/2007  | 1730 | Hail | 1         | 0      | 0        | 5000     | 0   |
| Webster (Zone) | 8/17/2007  | 1825 | Hail | 0.75      | 0      | 0        | 0        | 0   |
| Webster (Zone) | 2/26/2008  | 952  | Hail | 0.75      | 0      | 0        | 0        | 0   |
| Webster (Zone) | 4/10/2009  | 2310 | Hail | 1.75      | 0      | 0        | 2000     | 0   |
| Webster (Zone) | 3/27/2011  | 1321 | Hail | 1         | 0      | 0        | 0        | 0   |
| Webster (Zone) | 5/17/2012  | 1840 | Hail | 0.75      | 0      | 0        | 0        | 0   |
| Webster (Zone) | 5/22/2020  | 1720 | Hail | 1.75      | 0      | 0        | 15000    | 0   |
| Webster (Zone) | 3/13/2025  | 1445 | Hail | 1         | 0      | 0        | 1000     | 0   |
| <b>TOTALS:</b> |            |      |      |           | 0      | 0        | 25500    | 0   |

Source: National Climatic Data Center; Last entry since 2/6/2026

The community has experienced hailstorms in virtually all geographical areas, although the documented history reveals nominal property damage. These events are typically of short duration. Application of the documented record of eleven hailstorm events to the accompanying Hazard Frequency Table suggests a 26.32% probability of the community experiencing a hailstorm any given year (Hazard Frequency Table-Appendix A).

**Map 2.3: GMIS Webster County Wind Hazard Map**



Source: GEMA ITOS 2025; See Appendix A for the hazard score key

## Community Exposure

The random, sudden, and violent nature of thunderstorm winds place all residents and all physical development throughout the community at risk. This, of course, includes all the community's critical infrastructure; 37 structures enumerated in Appendix A. Aggregate value of the community's "non-critical" facilities has been estimated for use here; documentation is presented in Appendix A.

The greatest threat is of damage to crops grown in the unincorporated area. Widespread hailstorms of significant duration with stones of significant size at critical times of the crop year could damage fruit/nuts and strip foliage to the extent the agricultural economy could be devastated. A storm of significant duration could also expose the community to transportation accidents as accumulations of icy precipitation pose driving hazards. Residents can seek shelter, and there is typically little risk to critical facilities.

## Estimate of Potential Losses

Potential Losses were estimated by use of the OHS/GEMA web-based planning tool. Data input for the Assets Worksheet included the replacement value and structure content values of each critical facility identified. Because all areas of the community are exposed to the threat posed by this hazard, critical facilities distributed throughout the community are at risk. Thus, any percentage of the total replacement and structure contents value is subject to loss. The combined total estimated structure replacement value (\$31M) and total estimated contents value

(\$6M) are \$31.7M. This information can be reviewed in detail in Appendix D. Aggregate value of the community's "non-critical" facilities has been estimated for use here; documentation is presented in Appendix A.

Hailstorms pose primarily a risk of crop damage, an economic threat to the community rather than a threat to the physical infrastructure. The vast number of interactive variables that would apply makes it impractical to estimate potential crop losses. Nevertheless, the estimated cost of critical facility replacement (\$31M) and content value (\$6M) amounts to a total of \$31.7M (Appendix A). The community's non-critical infrastructure is generally not susceptible to adverse effects of hail.

## **Land Use and Development Trends**

Because thunderstorm winds are so random, neither land use nor development trends influence exposure to this hazard. Land use conversion in the community is limited, and development is both sparse and limited.

Because of direct and broad exposure to the natural elements, agricultural production constitutes the community's greatest exposure to this threat, which could result in significant, adverse, economic impact. No other land use and development patterns affect potential exposure to this hazard.

## **Multi-Jurisdictional Thunderstorm Differences**

Webster County is a Unified Government. The graphics included in this document display the full distribution of the county's critical facilities.

## **Hazard Risk and Vulnerability Summary**

Thunderstorm winds are the community's most common natural hazard event and have demonstrated the ability to strike anywhere at any time. The community must prepare in advance and be able to respond quickly and intelligently to such an event. This plan has occurred since the previous Webster County Hazard Mitigation Plan was updated.

The critical infrastructure is generally not threatened by this hazard, and there is little pre-emptive nature the community can do for protection. In addition to crop insurance purchased by agricultural producers, the resident population should be educated of the hazards associated with driving during, and immediately after, a hailstorm event.

As of 2026, there have been no changes in codes, ordinances, or development patterns that would affect the risk that the county faces from this hazard. Mitigation projects completed since 2015 include construction of a new fire station, purchase of emergency generators, water system capacity increases, and an EOC facility in the new Board of Commissioners' office.

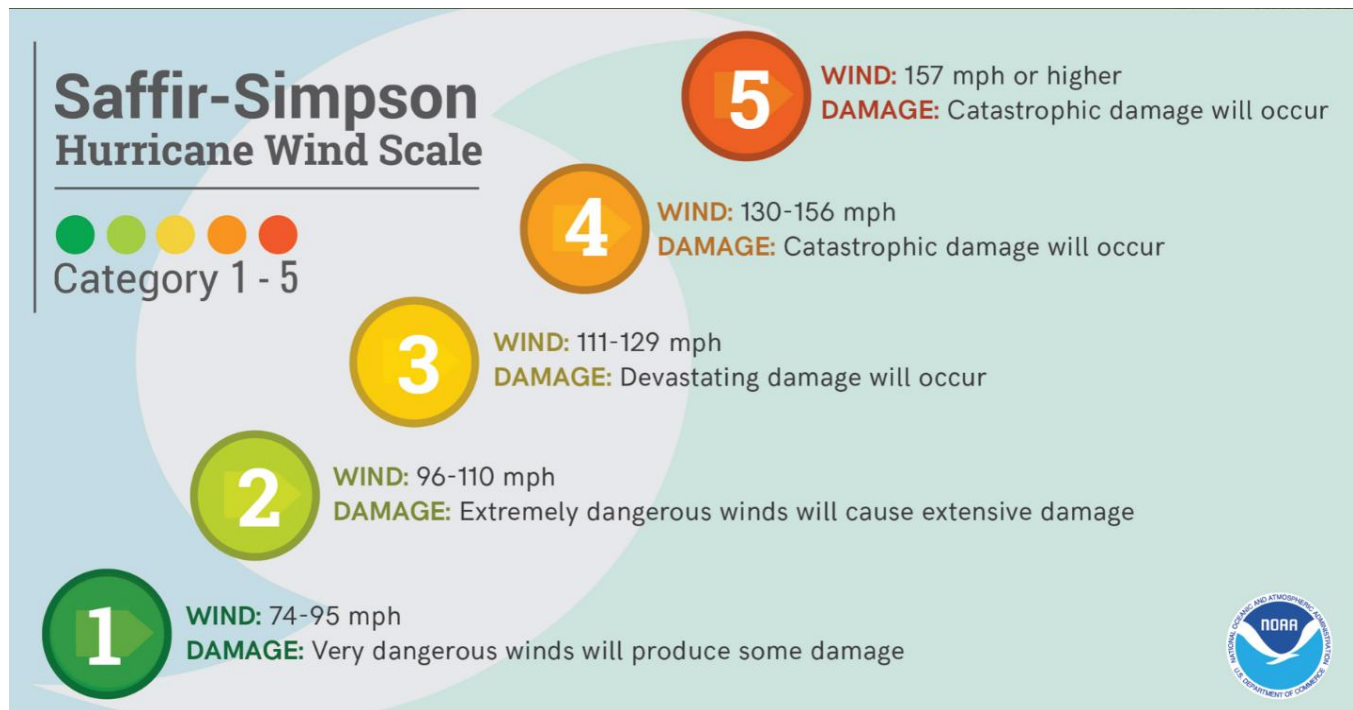
## HURRICANES AND TROPICAL STORMS

### Hazard Description

Both types of tropical cyclones, tropical storms and hurricanes, begin as tropical depressions over warm oceanic water. The life span of a tropical cyclone can be anywhere from a few hours to almost three weeks; mostly lasting approximately 5 to 10 days. Tropical depressions are generally characterized by wind speeds of 39 MPH (34 KTS) or under. Wind speeds of 39 to 73 MPH (34-63 KTS) are associated with tropical storms, and everything above 74 MPH wind speed is characterized as a hurricane.

Hurricanes occur especially in the western Atlantic under warm, humid conditions and are accompanied by excessive rain, thunder, and lightning. Although hurricanes are tropical storms, they can move into temperate latitudes, and they tend to slow down as they make landfall. Tropical Storms are normally associated with a storm surge, which is an abnormal rise in water levels caused by the storm in coastal areas. Safer-Simpson is the meteorological scale used to distinguish further between wind speeds/strengths of hurricanes.

**Graphic 2.1: Saffir Simpson Scale for Hurricanes**



### Hazard Profile

The historical record revealed sixteen events, all of which affected much of the state. Local damages were credited to Tropical Storm Alberto, which merited a fifty-five-county presidential disaster declaration and Tropical Storm Irma in 2017. Extrapolating from this documented record, there is a 21.05% probability of a tropical storm event any given year.

**Table 2.3: Webster County Hurricane and Tropical Storm Events 1996-2025**

| County/Zone    | Date       | Time  | Type           | DHT | Inj | PrD    | CrD   |
|----------------|------------|-------|----------------|-----|-----|--------|-------|
| Webster (Zone) | 9/14/2002  | 11:00 | Tropical Storm | 0   | 0   | 0.00K  | 0.00K |
| Webster (Zone) | 7/1/2003   | 00:00 | Tropical Storm | 0   | 0   | 0.00K  | 0.00K |
| Webster (Zone) | 9/6/2004   | 12:00 | Tropical Storm | 0   | 0   | 0.00K  | 0.00K |
| Webster (Zone) | 9/16/2004  | 00:00 | Tropical Storm | 0   | 0   | 0.00K  | 0.00K |
| Webster (Zone) | 9/26/2004  | 00:00 | Tropical Storm | 0   | 0   | 0.00K  | 0.00K |
| Webster (Zone) | 6/12/2005  | 00:00 | Tropical Storm | 0   | 0   | 0.00K  | 0.00K |
| Webster (Zone) | 7/6/2005   | 15:00 | Tropical Storm | 0   | 0   | 0.00K  | 0.00K |
| Webster (Zone) | 7/10/2005  | 10:00 | Hurricane      | 0   | 0   | 0.00K  | 0.00K |
| Webster (Zone) | 8/29/2005  | 11:00 | Hurricane      | 0   | 0   | 0.00K  | 0.00K |
| Webster (Zone) | 10/5/2005  | 04:00 | Tropical Storm | 0   | 0   | 0.00K  | 0.00K |
| Webster (Zone) | 8/21/2008  | 12:00 | Tropical Storm | 0   | 0   | 0.00K  | 0.00K |
| Webster (Zone) | 11/10/2009 | 05:00 | Tropical Storm | 0   | 0   | 0.00K  | 0.00K |
| Webster (Zone) | 9/4/2011   | 11:00 | Tropical Storm | 0   | 0   | 0.00K  | 0.00K |
| Webster (Zone) | 9/11/2017  | 09:00 | Tropical Storm | 0   | 0   | 50.00K | 0.00K |
| Webster (Zone) | 10/10/2018 | 13:00 | Tropical Storm | 0   | 0   | 0.00K  | 0.00K |
| Webster (Zone) | 10/28/2020 | 21:00 | Tropical Storm | 0   | 0   | 0.00K  | 0.00K |
| <b>Total:</b>  |            |       |                | 0   | 0   | 50.00K | 0.00K |

Source: National Climatic Data Center 202; Last entry since 2/6/2026

Webster County's proximity to the Gulf Coast raises its chance of being directly affected by a tropical storm or hurricane during the June through November season. Most hurricanes are downgraded to tropical storms by the time they reach Webster County. While the probability of an intense hurricane of category 3 to 5 directly affecting Webster County during the hurricane season is not high, aspects such as flooding and tornado spin offs from outer rain bands is a major probability.

## Community Exposure

Because of proximity to the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts, the community will always be susceptible to tropical storms. Furthermore, meteorologists have predicted a long-term cyclical increase in the weather patterns generating tropical storms. The entire community is exposed to this threat. This includes all the community's critical infrastructure; 37 structures enumerated in Appendix A. Aggregate value of the community's "non-critical" facilities has been estimated for use here; documentation is presented in Appendix D. The following probabilistic wind damage risk assessment modeled a Category One storm with maximum winds of 77 mph.

### Wind Damage Assessment

Separate analyses were performed to determine wind and hurricane storm surge-related flood losses. This section describes the wind-based losses to Webster County. Wind losses were determined from probabilistic models run for the Category One storm which equates to the 1% chance storm event. Figure 3 shows wind speeds for the modeled Category One storm.

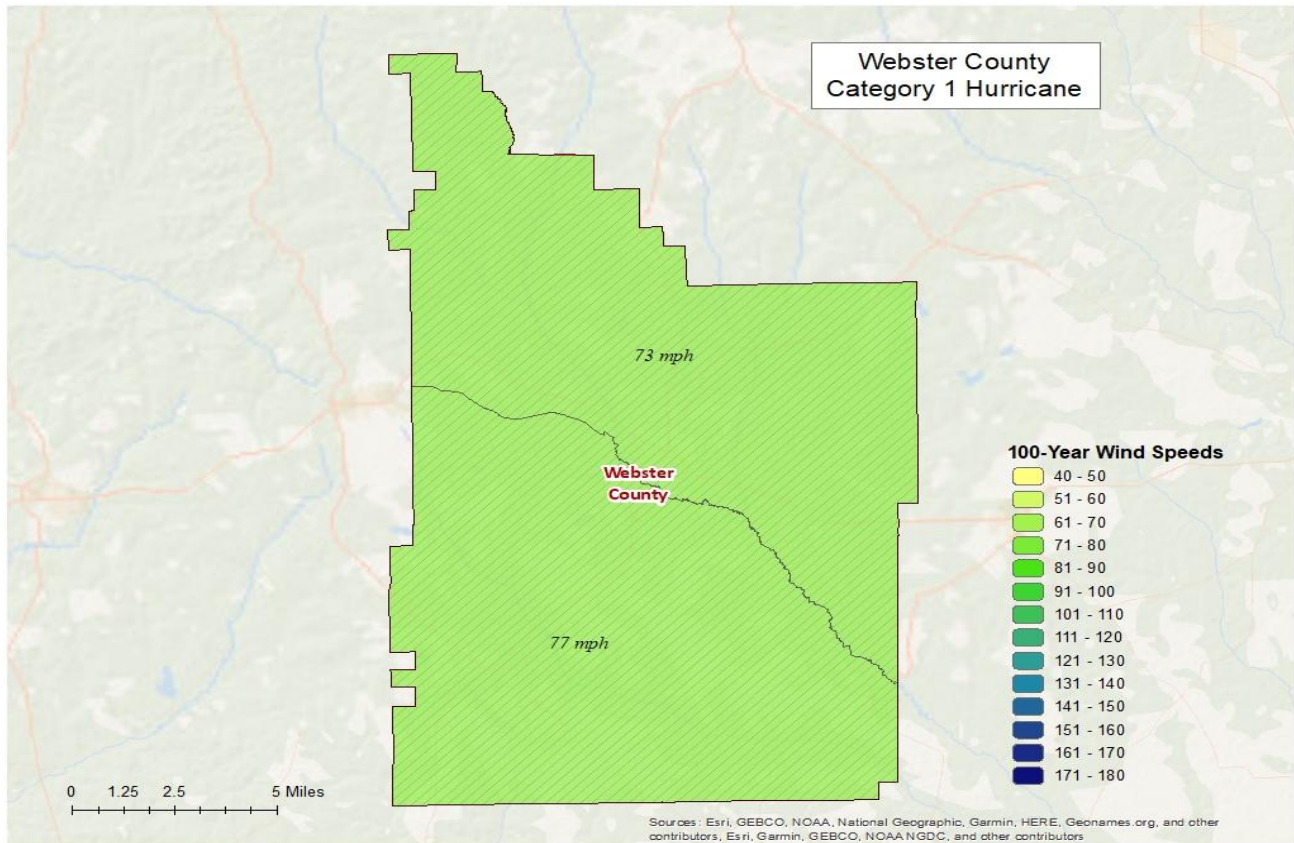


Figure 1: Wind Speeds by Storm Category

### Wind-Related Building Damages

Buildings in Webster County are vulnerable to storm events, and the cost to rebuild may have significant consequences to the community. The following table shows a summary of the results of wind-related building damage in Webster County for the Category One (100 Year Event) storm. The loss ratio expresses building losses as a percentage of total building replacement cost in the county. Figure 4 illustrates the building loss ratios of the modeled Category One storm.

Table 2.4: Hurricane Wind Building Damage

| Classification | Number of Buildings Damaged | Total Building Damage | Total Economic Loss <sup>1</sup> | Loss Ratio |
|----------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|------------|
| Category One   | 9                           | \$242,540             | \$339,850                        | 0.25%      |

<sup>1</sup> Includes property damage (infrastructure, contents, and inventory) as well as business interruption losses.

Note that wind damaged buildings are not reported by jurisdiction. This is due to the fact that census tract boundaries – upon which hurricane building losses are based – do not closely coincide with jurisdiction boundaries.

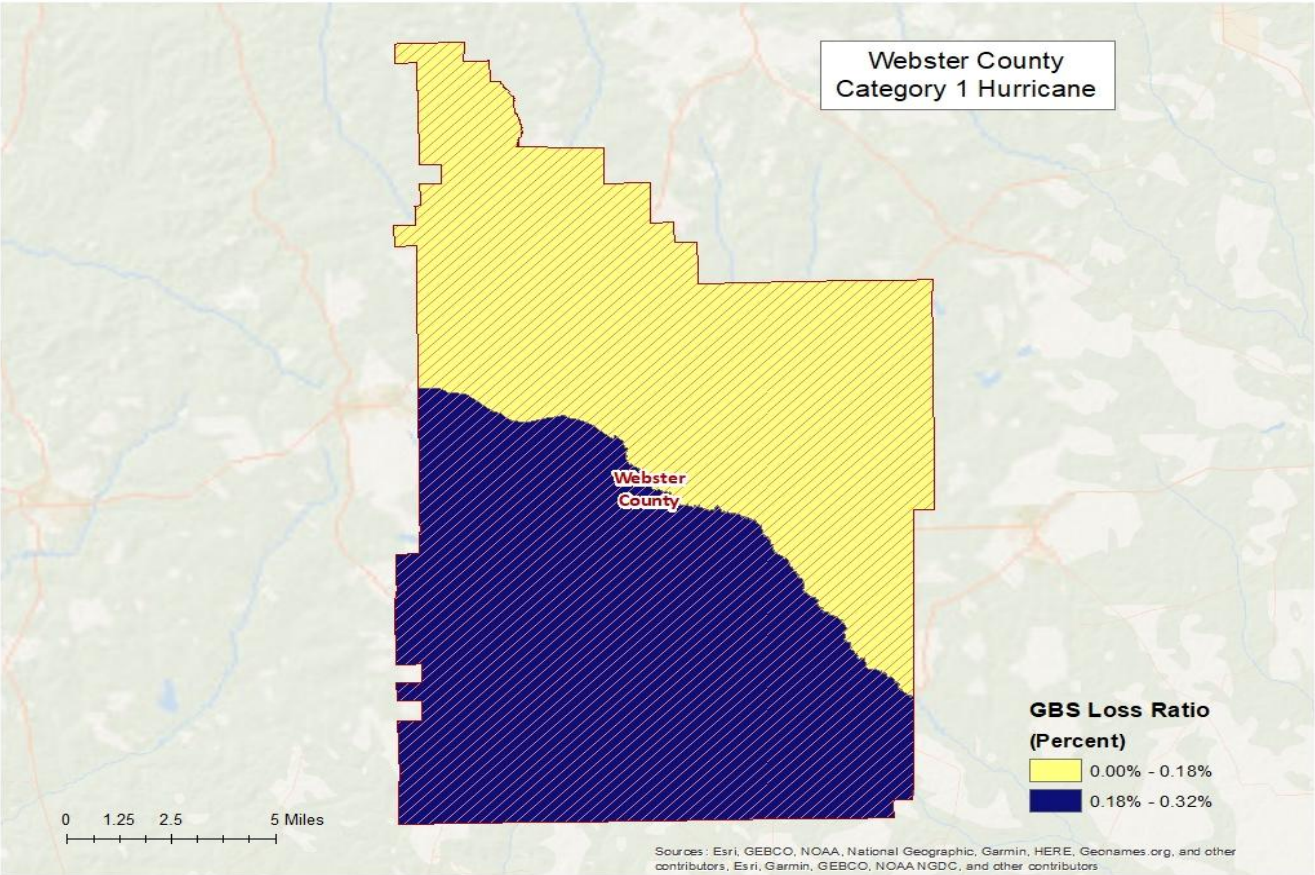


Figure 2: Hurricane Wind Building Loss Ratios

Essential Facility Losses

Essential facilities are also vulnerable to storm events, and the potential loss of functionality may have significant consequences to the community. HAZUS-MH identified the essential facilities that may be moderately or severely damaged by winds. The results are compiled in Table 6.

Table 2.5: Wind-Damaged Essential Facility Losses

There are 10 essential facilities in Webster County.

| Classification  | Number |
|-----------------|--------|
| Care Facilities | 2      |
| EOCs            | 1      |
| Fire Stations   | 5      |
| Police Stations | 1      |
| Schools         | 1      |

| Classification | Facilities At Least Moderately Damaged > 50% | Facilities Completely Damaged > 50% | Facilities with Expected Loss of Use (< 1 day) |
|----------------|----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Category One   | 0                                            | 0                                   | 10                                             |

## Shelter Requirements

HAZUS-MH estimates the number of households evacuated from buildings with severe damage from high velocity winds as well as the number of people who will require short-term sheltering. Since the 1% chance storm event for Webster County is a Category One storm, the resulting damage is not enough to displace Households or require temporary shelters as shown in the results listed in Table 7.

**Table 2.6: Displaced Households and People**

| Classification | # of Displaced Households | # of People Needing Short-Term Shelter |
|----------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Category One   | 0                         | 0                                      |

### Debris Generated from Hurricane Wind

HAZUS-MH estimates the amount of debris that will be generated by high velocity hurricane winds and quantifies it into three broad categories to determine the material handling equipment needed:

- Reinforced Concrete and Steel Debris
- Brick and Wood and Other Building Debris
- Tree Debris

Different material handling equipment is required for each category of debris. The estimates of debris for this scenario are listed in Table 8. The amount of hurricane wind related tree debris that is estimated to require pick up at the public's expense is listed in the eligible tree debris column.

**Table 2.7: Wind-Related Debris Weight (Tons)**

| Classification | Brick, Wood, and Other | Reinforced Concrete and Steel | Eligible Tree Debris | Other Tree Debris | Total  |
|----------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|--------|
| Category One   | 27                     | 0                             | 766                  | 22,857            | 23,650 |

Figure 5 shows the distribution of all wind related debris resulting from a Category One storm. Each dot represents 20 tons of debris within the census tract in which it is located. The dots are randomly distributed within each census tract and therefore do not represent the specific location of debris sites.

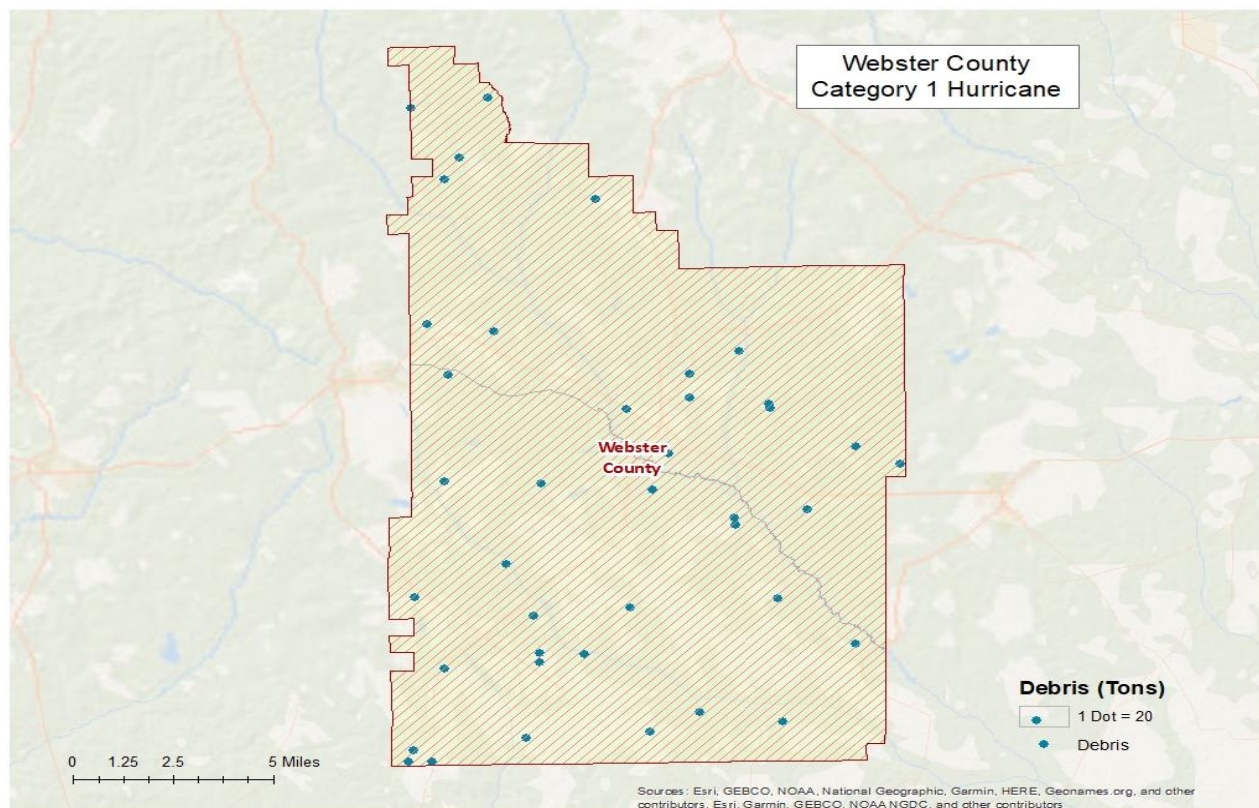


Figure 3: Wind-Related Debris Weight (Tons)

## Estimate of Potential Losses

Potential Losses were estimated by use of the OHS/GEMA web-based planning tool. Data input for the Assets Worksheet included the replacement value and structure content value of each critical facility identified. Because all areas of the community are exposed to the threat posed by this hazard, critical facilities distributed throughout the county are at risk. Thus, any percentage of the total replacement and structure content values is subject to loss. The combined total estimated structure replacement value (\$31M) and total estimated contents value (\$6M) are \$31.7M. This information can be reviewed in detail in Appendix A. Aggregate value of the community's "non-critical" facilities has been estimated for use here; documentation is presented in Appendix A.

## Land Use and Development Trends

Land use conversion in the community is limited, and development is both sparse and limited. Because tropical storms typically affect large geographical areas, neither land use nor development trends influence exposure to this hazard.

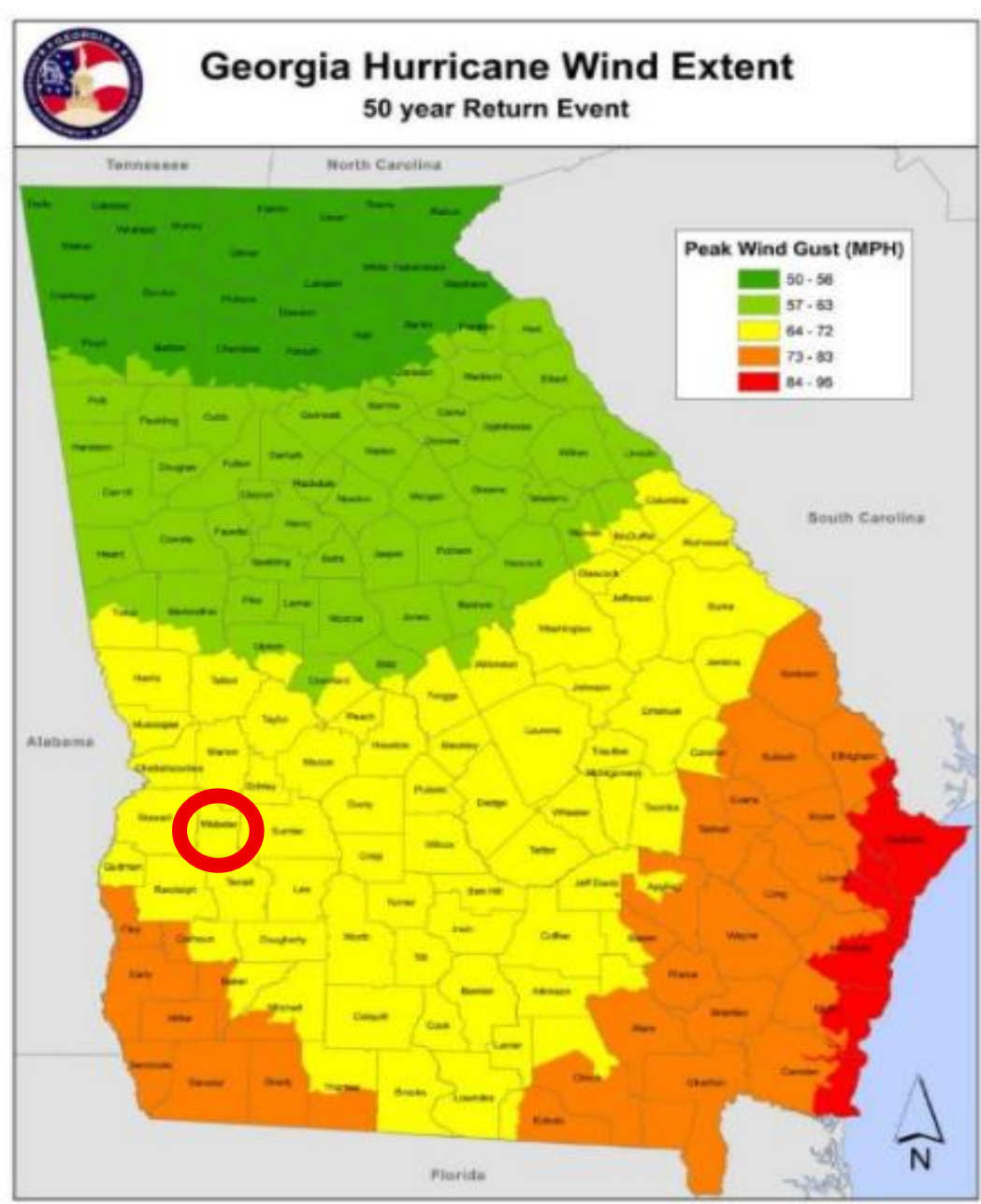
## Multi-Jurisdictional Hurricanes Differences

Webster County is a Unified Government. The graphics included in this document display the full distribution of the county's critical facilities.

**Hazard Risk and Vulnerability Summary**

Because of geographic location and proximity to both the Atlantic and Gulf coasts, the community will always be susceptible to the threat of tropical storms. This plan has occurred since the previous Webster County Hazard Mitigation Plan was updated. As of 2026, there have been no changes in codes, ordinances, or development patterns that would affect the risk that the county faces from this hazard.

**Map 2.4: Hurricane Wind Extent in Georgia**



Source: 2024 Georgia Hazard Mitigation Plan

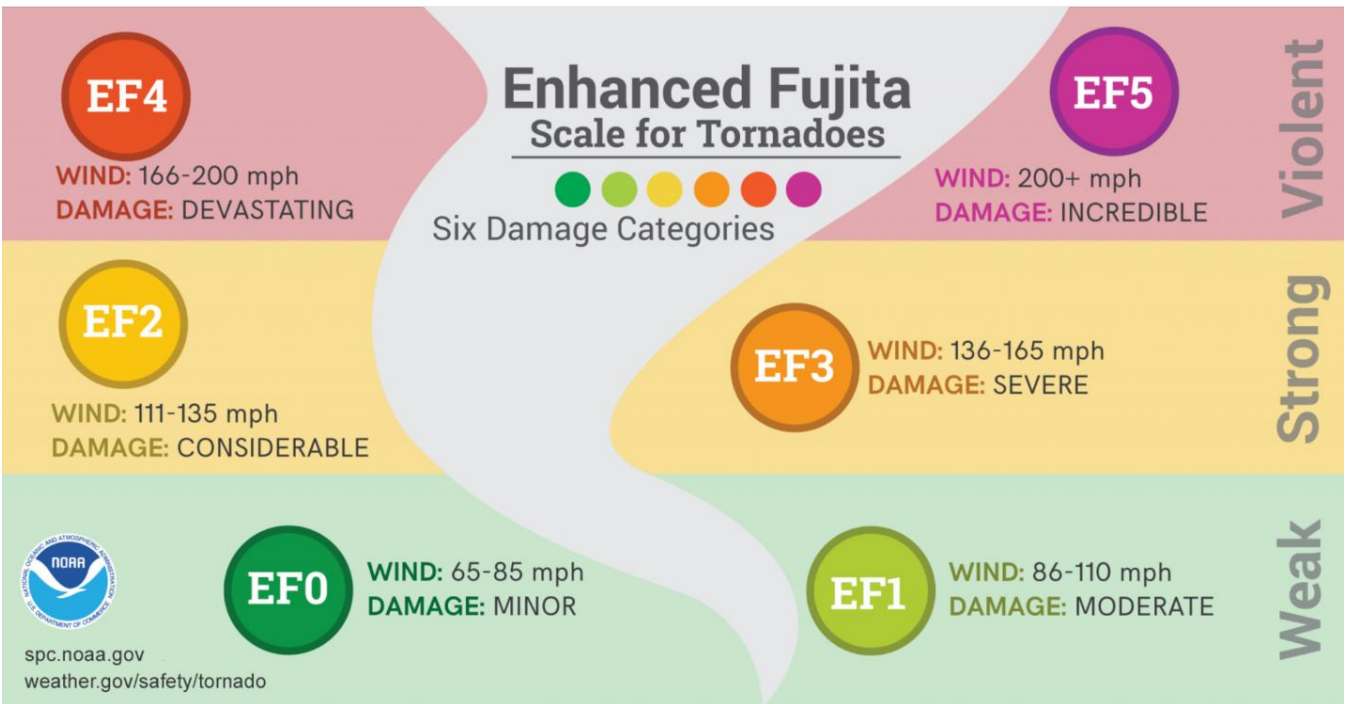
# TORNADO

## Hazard Description

A tornado is a violent destructive whirling wind, accompanied by a funnel-shaped cloud. Tornadoes occur most often in association with tropical thunderstorms during warm and humid weather and are commonly associated with the spring and summer season. Tornadoes can generate the strongest winds known on earth, many of which can exceed speeds of 250 miles per hour. Structural destruction is often caused by these high-speed winds and the impact of wind-borne debris.

Tornadoes normally move from southwest to northeast, and their paths of destruction can be approximately one mile wide and fifty miles long. The tornado season in Georgia normally lasts from March until August, although tornadoes can strike at any time of the year given the right atmospheric conditions. Tornadoes can also develop as a spin-off from hurricanes. To categorize the intensity of the winds and the levels of damage, the Fujita-Scale (F-scale) listed below is used internationally. Considering the possible damage caused by tornadoes and the winds associated with them, tornadoes are rightfully called the most violent storms.

Graphic 2.2: Enhance Fujita Scale for Tornadoes



2025 HAZUS Report

## Hazard Profile

All geographical areas of the county are susceptible to the randomness of tornadic activity. Although disastrous tornadoes have not befallen the community in recent years, small storms have nevertheless been present, and climatic conditions were conducive for others to occur as has been evidenced by the issuance of tornado warnings and watches. Information gleaned from available data revealed the following history of tornadic activity in the community.

**Table 2.8: Webster County Tornado Events (1950- 2025)**

| Location                         | Date      | Time | Type    | Magnitude | Deaths | Injuries | Property Damage | Crop Damage |
|----------------------------------|-----------|------|---------|-----------|--------|----------|-----------------|-------------|
| Webster Co.                      | 12/5/1954 | 1430 | Tornado | F2        | 0      | 8        | 250000          | 0           |
| Webster Co.                      | 3/18/1981 | 1405 | Tornado | F1        | 0      | 0        | 25000           | 0           |
| Webster Co.                      | 3/1/2007  | 2100 | Tornado | EF3       | 0      | 3        | 1000000         | 0           |
| Webster Co.                      | 4/7/2016  | 127  | Tornado | EF0       | 0      | 0        | 30000           | 0           |
| Webster Co.                      | 4/3/2017  | 1129 | Tornado | EF0       | 0      | 0        | 15000           | 0           |
| Webster Co.                      | 4/5/2017  | 1143 | Tornado | EF1       | 0      | 0        | 100000          | 0           |
| Webster Co.                      | 3/3/2019  | 1730 | Tornado | EF0       | 0      | 0        | 15000           | 0           |
| <b>Total:</b>                    |           |      |         |           | 0      | 0        | 1435000         | 0           |
| <b>Last entry since 2/6/2026</b> |           |      |         |           |        |          |                 |             |

Source: National Climatic Data Center 2026; Last entry since 2/6/2026

There have not been any tornadoes in Webster County since the previous Hazard Mitigation Plan was completed.

Since 1950 Webster County has been hit by one (1) F1 tornado, one (1) F2 tornado, three (3) EF0 tornadoes, one (1) EF1 tornado, and one (1) EF3 tornado. Tornadoes can occur at any time of day or night, anywhere, during any season of the year. Although Webster County does not lie in the center of known tornado activity, there is always a possibility of the occurrence of tornadoes. The potential damage caused by a tornado event is extremely high. Because tornadoes behave erratically, and can change their direction quickly, no predictions are possible as to where they might hit. Although no other major tornadoes or funnel clouds have been recorded in Webster County in the past half century, tornadoes are still considered a real-life threat for the county and its municipalities.

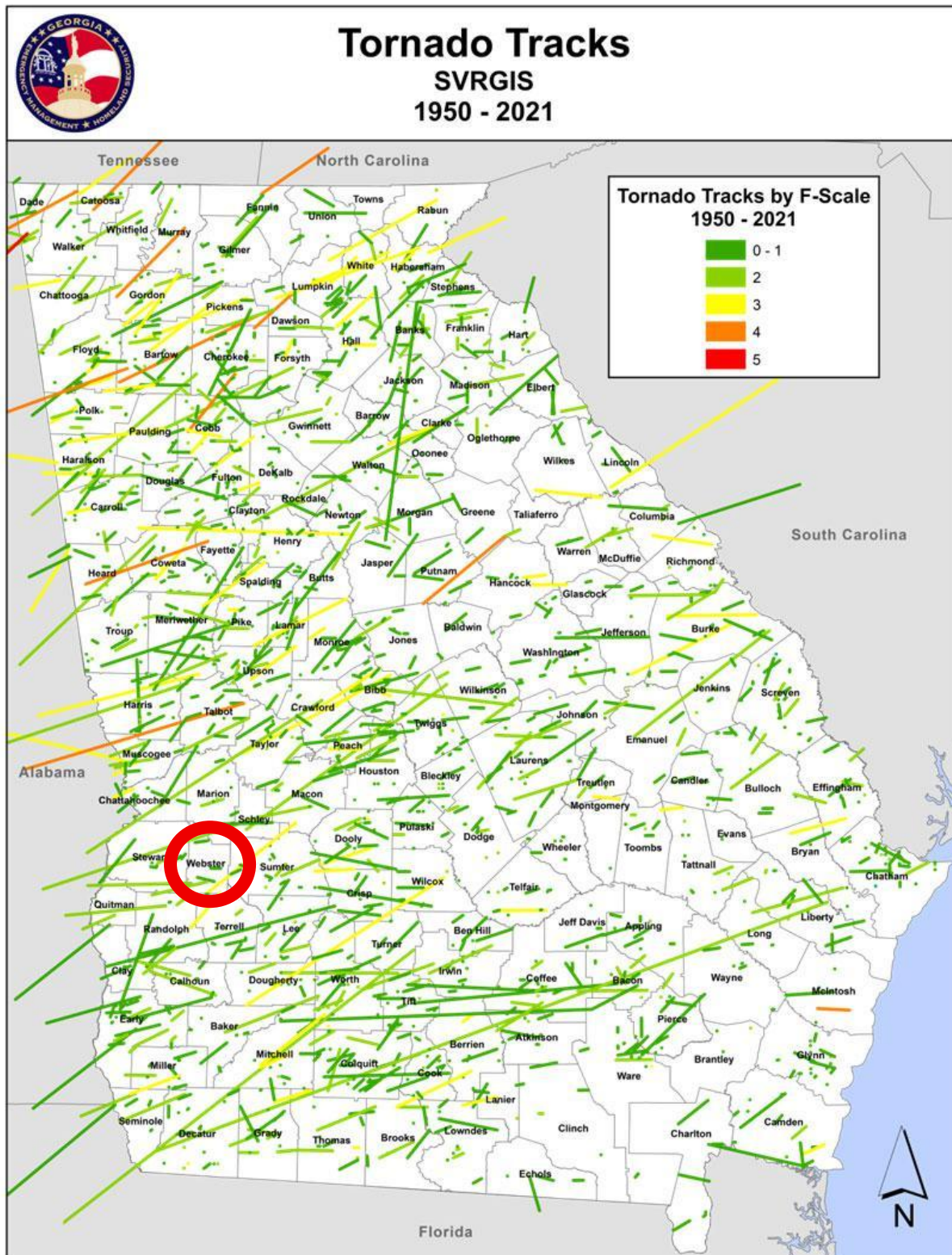
Based on NOAA and Storm Prediction Center Statistics, FEMA has determined Tornado Activity in the United States per 1,000 square miles. According to this NOAA, Webster County is located in the zone where 6-10 tornadoes have been recorded per 1,000 square miles, meaning that there is indeed a probability of tornado activity.

Based on the historic trend analysis of available data (Hazard Frequency Table- Appendix A), the community will experience around 10.86 tornadoes and has a 9.21% chance of experiencing a tornado event any given year.

## Community Exposure

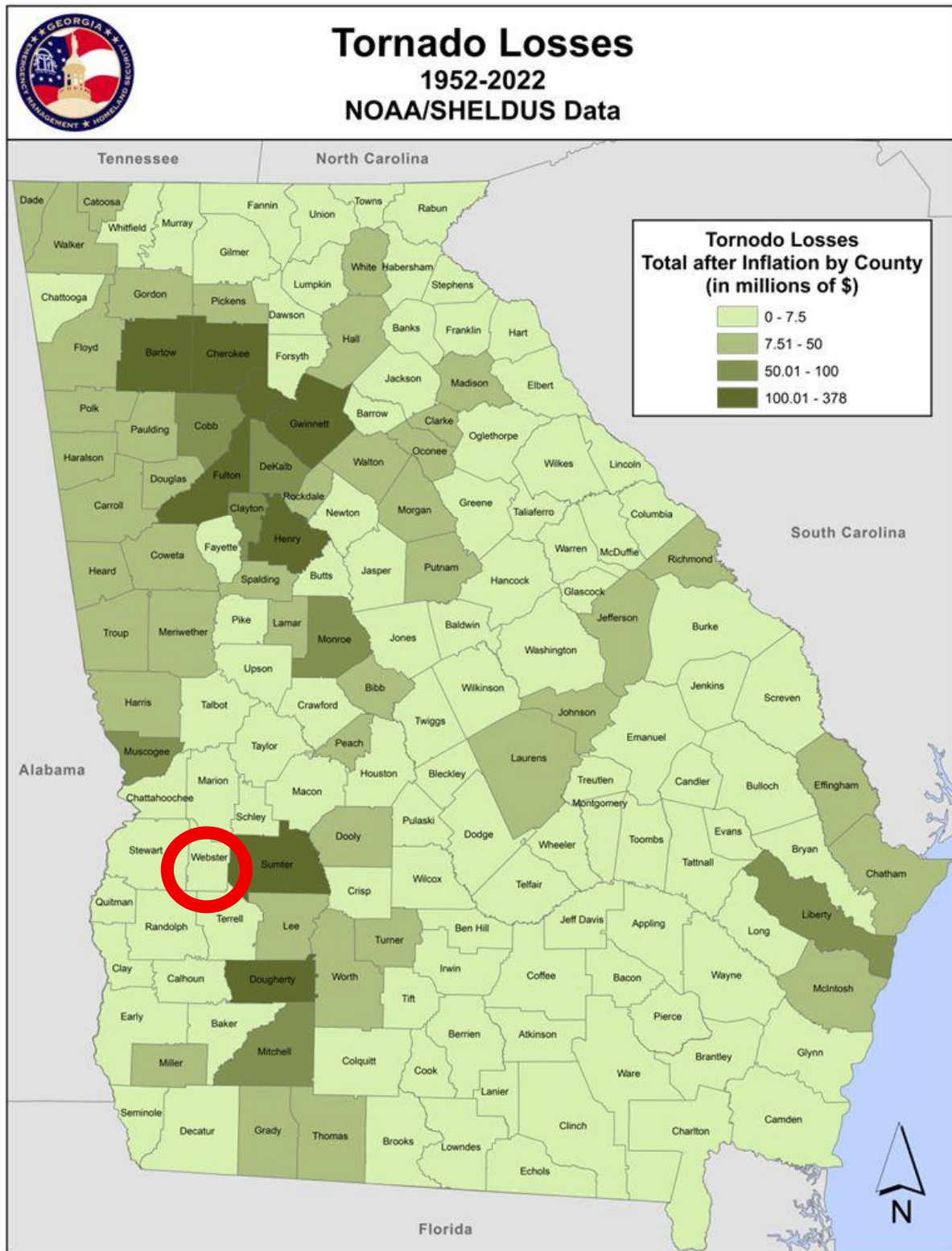
The random, sudden, and violent nature of the tornado place all residents and all physical development throughout the community at risk. This, of course, includes all critical infrastructure; 40 structures enumerated in Appendix D.

Map 2.5: Georgia Tornado Tracks 1952-2021



Source: Georgia Hazard Mitigation Strategy 2024

Map 2.6: Georgia Tornado Losses 1952-2022



Source: Georgia Hazard Mitigation Strategy 2024

## Estimate of Potential Losses

Potential Losses were estimated by use of the OHS/GEMA web-based planning tool. Data input for the Assets Worksheet included the replacement value and structure content value of each critical facility identified. Because all areas of the community are exposed to the threat posed by this hazard, critical facilities distributed throughout the county are at risk. Thus, any percentage of total replacement and structure contents values is subject to loss. The combined total estimated structure replacement value (\$31M) and total estimated contents value (\$6M) are \$31.7M. This information can be reviewed in detail in Appendix A. Aggregate value of the community's "non-critical" facilities has been estimated for use here; documentation is presented in Appendix A. Population, and other demographic data are presented in Appendix E.

### Hypothetical Tornado Scenario

For this report, an EF3 tornado was modeled to illustrate the potential impacts of tornadoes of this magnitude in the county. The analysis used a hypothetical path based upon an EF3 tornado event running along the predominant direction of historical tornados (southeast to northwest). The tornado path was placed to travel through Webster County. The selected widths were modeled after a re-creation of the Fujita-Scale guidelines based on conceptual wind speeds, path widths, and path lengths. There is no guarantee that every tornado will fit exactly into one of these categories. Table 11 depicts tornado path widths and expected damage.

**Table 2.9: Tornado Path Widths and Damage Curves**

| Fujita Scale | Path Width (feet) | Maximum Expected Damage |
|--------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| EF-5         | 2,400             | 100%                    |
| EF-4         | 1,800             | 100%                    |
| EF-3         | 1,200             | 80%                     |
| EF-2         | 600               | 50%                     |
| EF-1         | 300               | 10%                     |
| EF-0         | 300               | 0%                      |

Within any given tornado path there are degrees of damage. The most intense damage occurs within the center of the damage path, with decreasing amounts of damage away from the center. After the hypothetical path is digitized on a map, the process is modeled in GIS by adding buffers (damage zones) around the tornado path. Figure 11 describes the zone analysis.

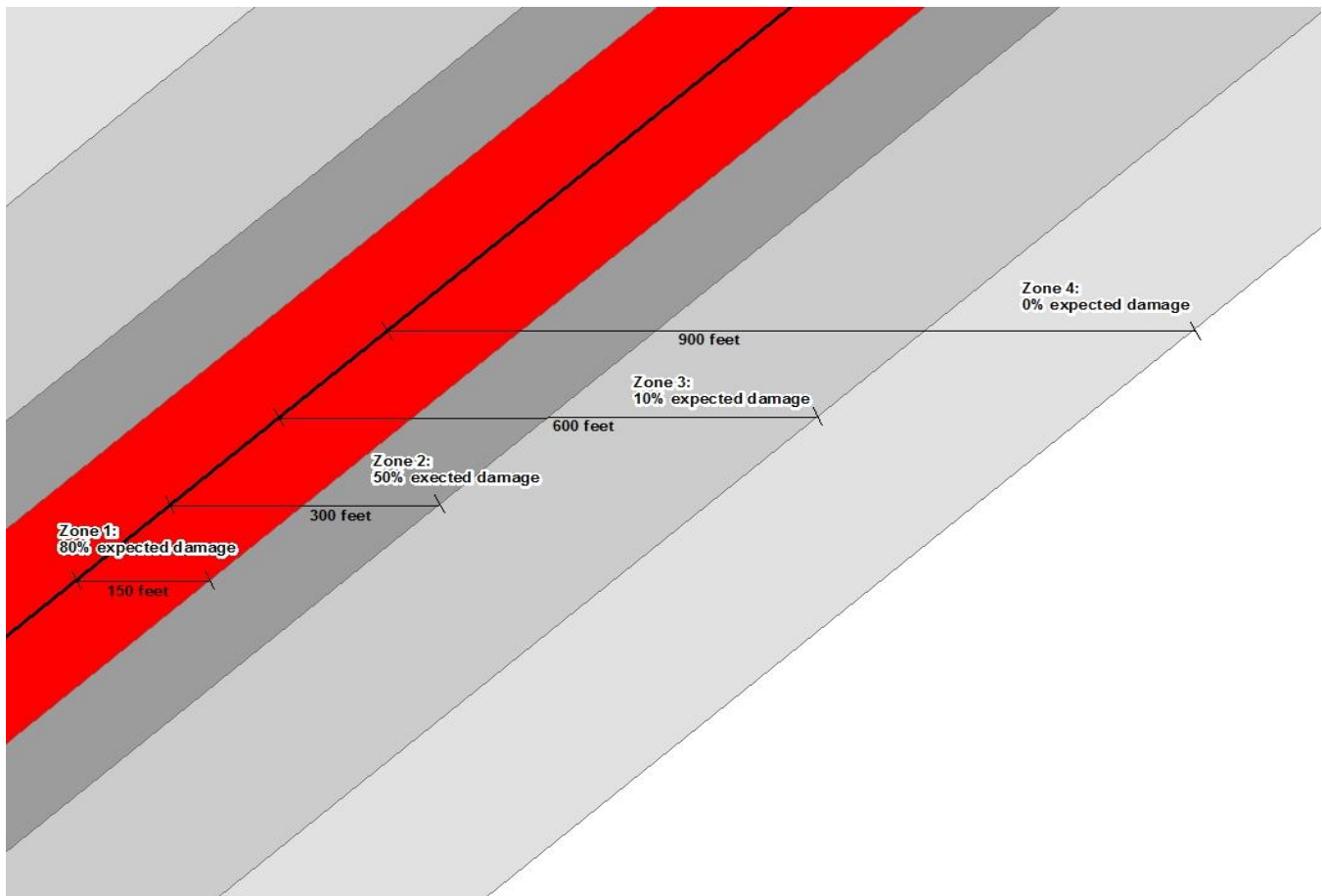


Figure 4: EF Scale Tornado Zones

An EF3 tornado has four damage zones, depicted in Table 12. Major damage is estimated within 150 feet of the tornado path. The outer buffer is 900 feet from the tornado path, within which buildings will not experience any damage. The selected hypothetical tornado path is depicted in Figure 12, and the damage curve buffer zones are shown in Figure 13.

**Table 2.10: EF3 Tornado Zones and Damage Curves**

| Zone | Buffer (feet) | Damage Curve |
|------|---------------|--------------|
| 1    | 0-150         | 80%          |
| 2    | 150-300       | 50%          |
| 3    | 300-600       | 10%          |
| 4    | 600-900       | 0%           |

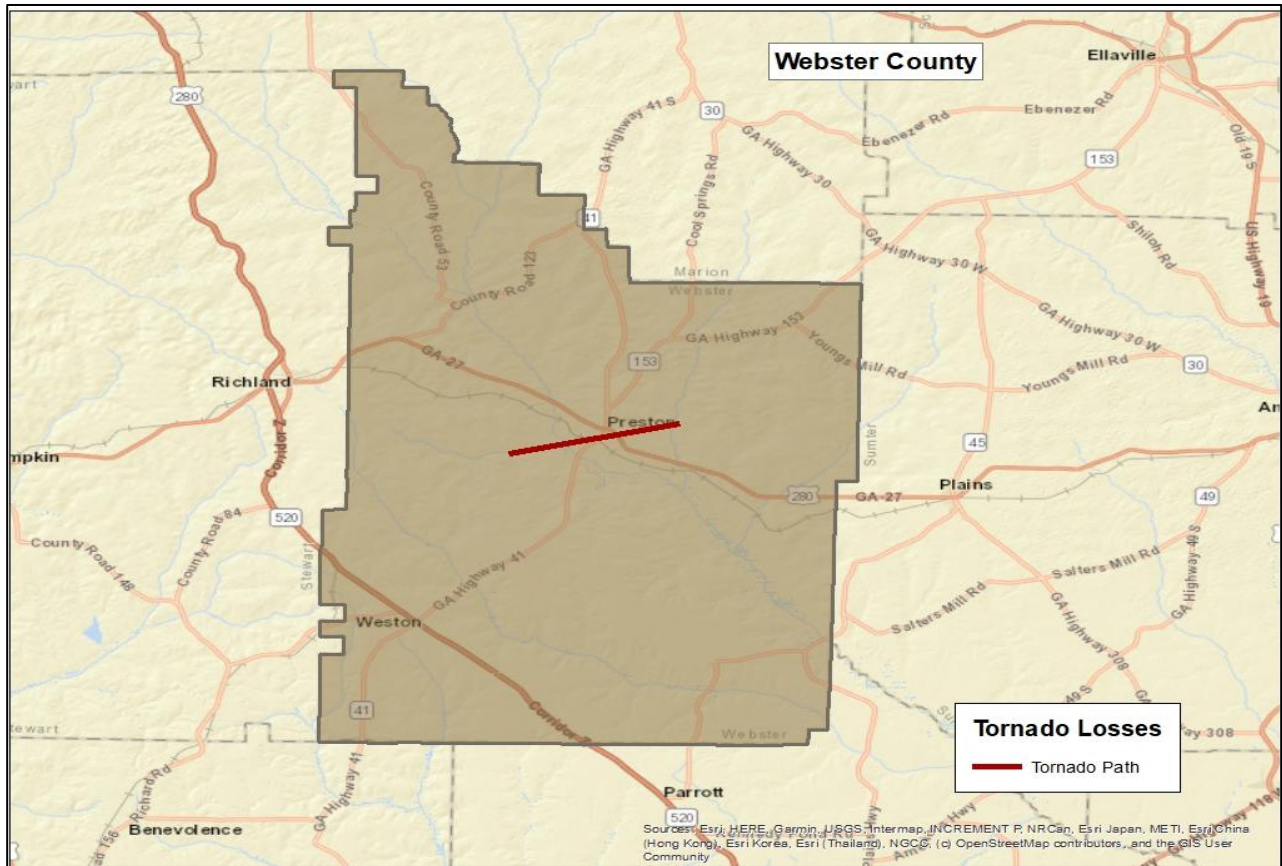


Figure 5: Hypothetical EF3 Tornado Path in Webster County

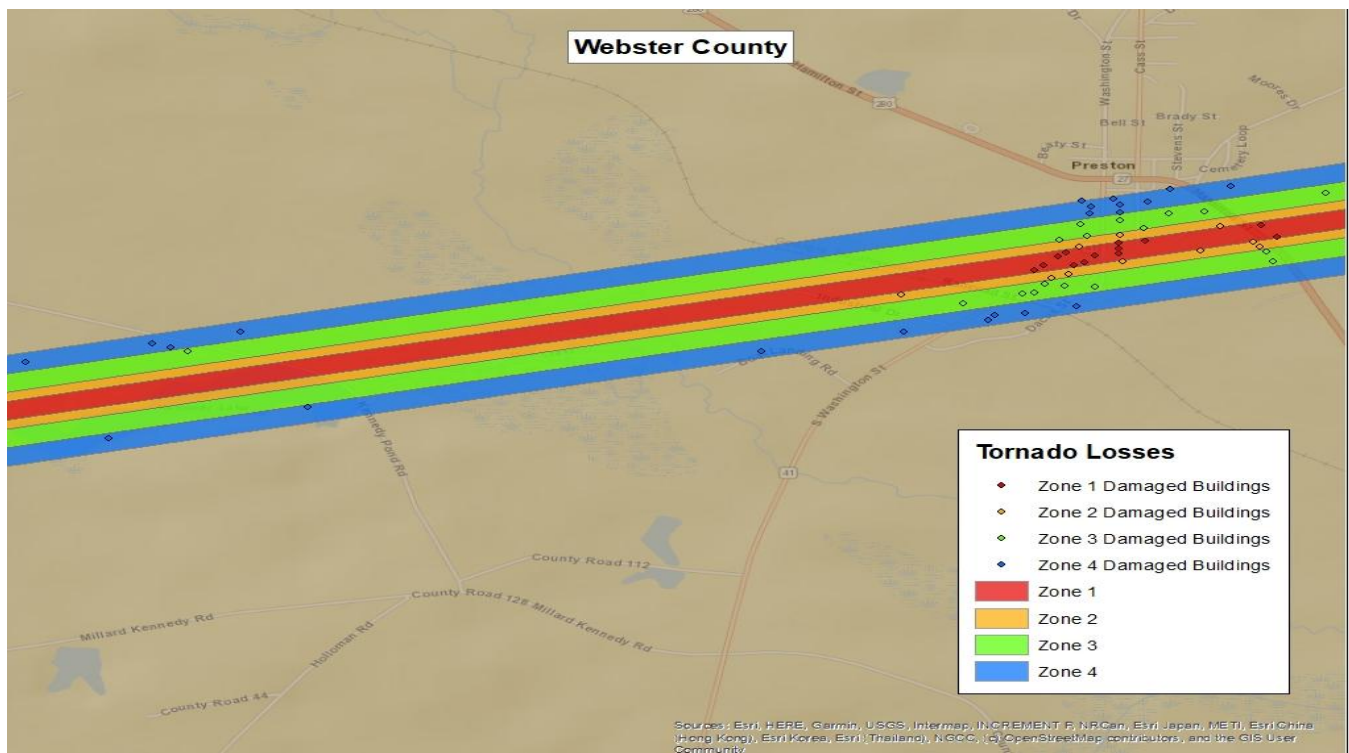


Figure 6: Modeled EF3 Tornado Damage Buffers in Webster County

### EF3 Tornado Building Damages

The analysis estimated that approximately 75 buildings could be damaged, with estimated building losses of \$1.6 million. The building losses are an estimate of building replacement costs multiplied by the percentages of damage. The overlay was performed against parcels provided by Webster County that were joined with Assessor records showing estimated property replacement costs. The Assessor records often do not distinguish parcels by occupancy class if the parcels are not taxable and thus the number of buildings and replacement costs may be underestimated. The results of the analysis are depicted in Table 2.11.

**Table 2.11: Estimated Building Losses by Occupancy Type**

| Occupancy   | Buildings Damaged | Building Losses |
|-------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Commercial  | 6                 | \$25,334        |
| Education   | 3                 | \$0             |
| Industrial  | 5                 | \$75,492        |
| Religious   | 2                 | \$101,108       |
| Residential | 59                | \$1,393,190     |
| Total       | 75                | \$1,595,124     |

### EF3 Tornado Essential Facility Damage

There was one essential facility located in the tornado path – one school. Table 2.12 outlines the specific facility and the amount of damage under the scenario.

**Table 2.12: Estimated Essential Facilities Damaged**

| Facility                                     | Amount of Damage |
|----------------------------------------------|------------------|
| Webster County Elementary/Middle/High School | Major Damage     |

According to the Georgia Department of Education, Webster County Elementary/Middle/High School’s enrollment was approximately 220 students as of March 2026. Depending on the time of day, a tornado strike as depicted in this scenario could result in significant injury and loss of life. In addition, arrangements would have to be made for the continued education of the students in another location.

The location of the damaged Essential Facility is mapped in Figure 14.

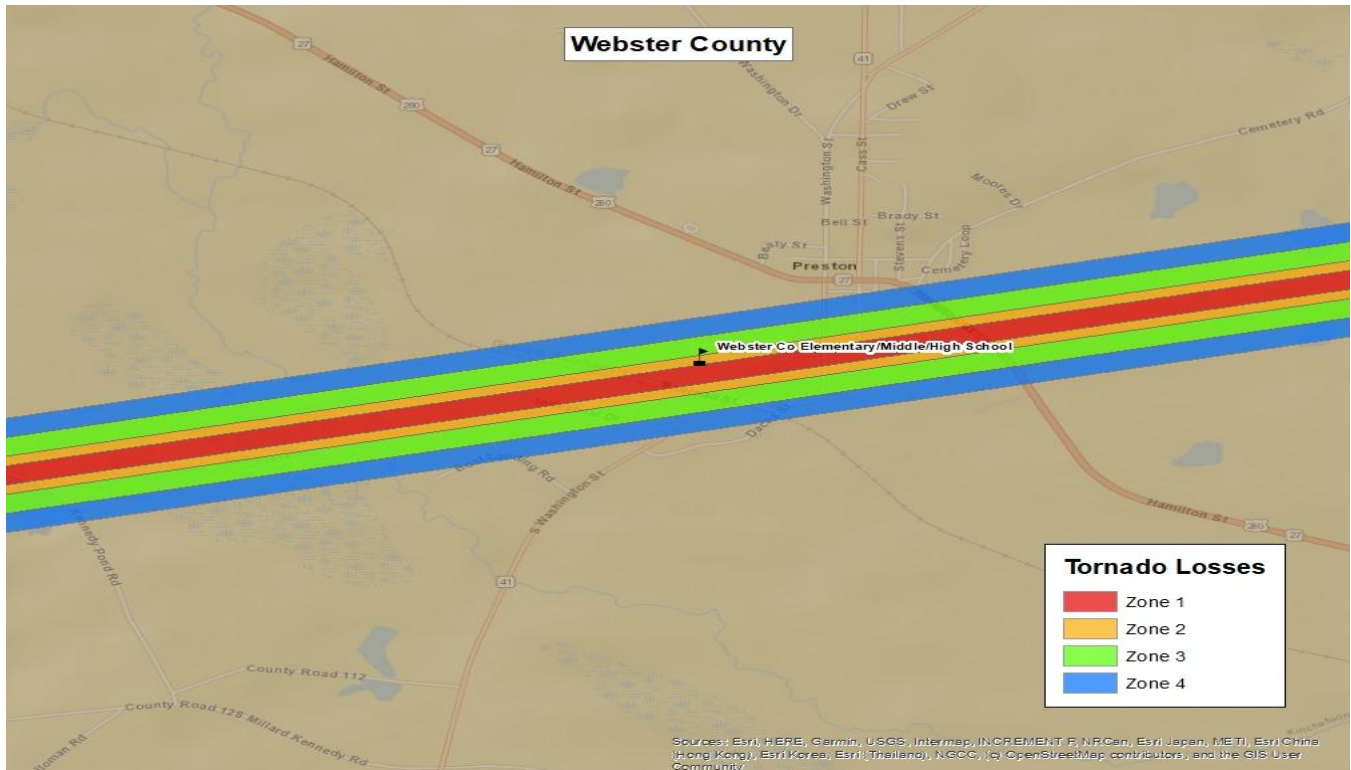


Figure 7: Modeled Essential Facility Damage in Webster County

## Land Use and Development Trends

Because tornado strikes are so random, neither land use nor development trends influence exposure to this hazard. Land use conversion in the community is limited, and development is both sparse and limited.

## MultiJurisdictional Tornado Differences

Webster County is a Unified Government. The graphics included in this document display the full distribution of the county's critical facilities.

## Hazard Risk and Vulnerability Summary

The community's greatest natural hazard loss to date has been the result of a tornado event (1954). Tornadoes can strike anywhere in the community, at any time of day and any time of year, with suddenness and with great intensity because of weather conditions common to the area. The community must prepare in advance and be able to respond quickly and appropriately to such an event. This plan has occurred since the previous Webster County Hazard Mitigation Plan was updated. As of 2026, there have been no changes in codes, ordinances, or development patterns that would affect the risk that the county faces from this hazard.

## INLAND FLOODING

### Hazard Description

Floods are defined as the rising of bodies of water, like rivers and streams, overflowing their natural or artificial banks onto normally dry land. These high-water stages often occur with severe tropical storms or torrential rains from hurricanes. Floods can be slow as the result of extended rain or a storm event or fast rising as the result of a flash flood. Flash floods can be expected when an area is affected by large amounts of rainfall in a short time; these floods can often result in dam failure. Generally, however, they develop over a period of days.

As defined by the National Flood Insurance Program, a flood is:

*A general and temporary condition of partial or complete inundation of two or more acres of normally dry land area or of two or more properties (at least one of which is your property) from, Overflow of inland or tidal waters, Unusual and rapid accumulation or runoff of surface waters from any source, or A mudflow. [The] collapse or subsidence of land along the shore of a lake or similar body of water as a result of erosion or undermining caused by waves or currents of water exceeding anticipated cyclical levels that result in a flood."*

To determine if an area is susceptible to flooding, many factors must be considered; among them, precipitation intensity and duration, topography, basin size, drainage patterns of streams, ground saturation, soil permeability, drainage, and vegetation cover. The installation of impermeable surfaces, for example roads, parking lots, and roofs, increases the amount of surface water directly flowing into rivers and creeks, and increases the risk of these waterways flooding.

### Hazard Profile

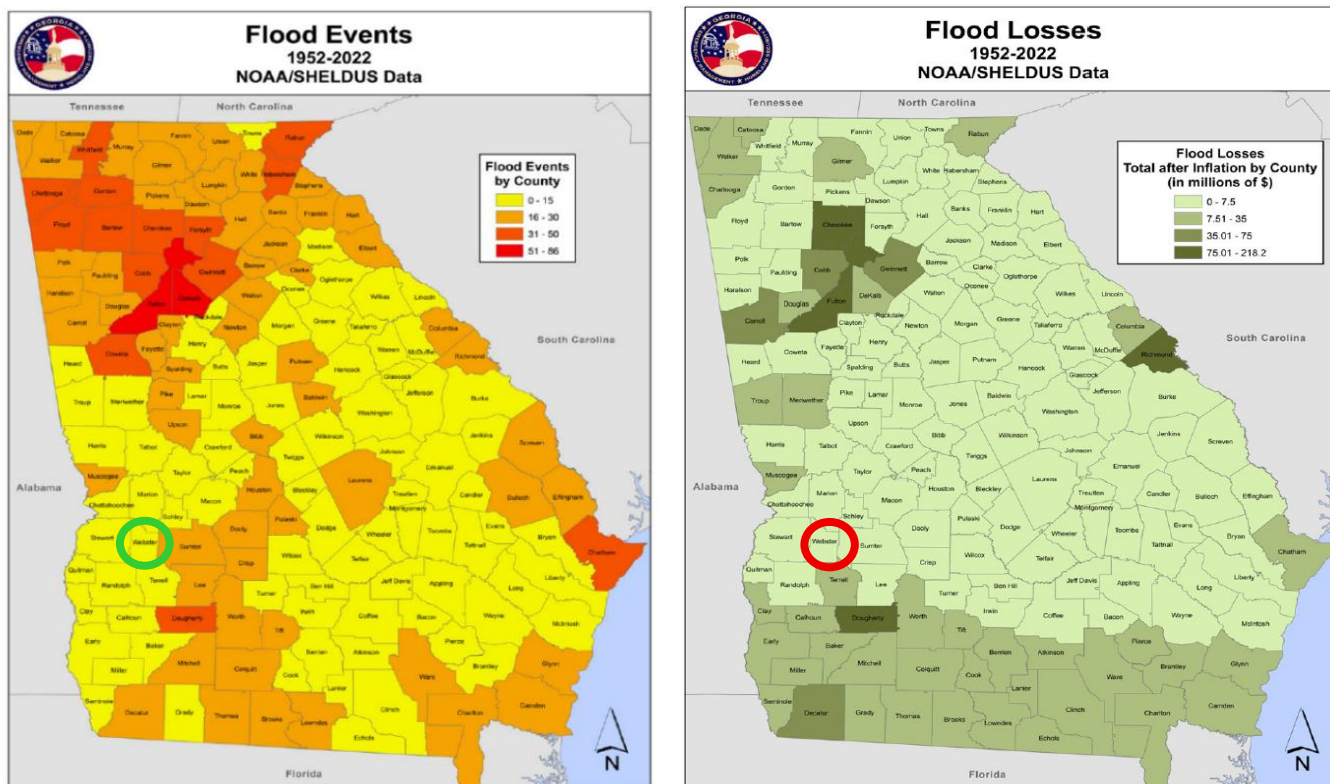
The community's largest flood event resulted from Tropical Storm Alberto in 1994 which, between July 3 and July 7, doused "semi-saturated" soils with  $\pm 20$  of rainfall, almost half the community's total annual average. Streams of all sizes overflowed, farm pond dams burst resulting in numerous roads and bridges being damaged or destroyed. Webster was one of fifty-five Georgia counties included in the July 7, 1994, presidential disaster declaration. Based on the documented historical record presented below, there is a 10.86% probability of a flood event any given year. (Hazard Frequency Table-Appendix A). Impacts of such events are felt most frequently in the middle of the County and downstream of the confluence of the Lanahassee and Kinchafoonee Creeks. A USGS Gauge is set up on Kinchafoonee Creek. The data suggests that historic crests range from 6.17 feet to 12.16 feet. Data also shows that the average depth of Kinchafoonee Creek is 8.19 feet.

**Table 2.13: Webster County Flood Events (1950-2026)**

| Location       | Date       | Time | Type        | Dth | Inj | PrD   | CrD |
|----------------|------------|------|-------------|-----|-----|-------|-----|
| Webster (Zone) | 12/1/1996  | 1120 | Flash Flood | 0   | 0   | 0     | 0   |
| Webster (Zone) | 3/8/1998   | 700  | Flood       | 0   | 0   | 10000 | 0   |
| Webster (Zone) | 7/13/2003  | 1830 | Flash Flood | 0   | 0   | 0     | 0   |
| Webster (Zone) | 3/27/2005  | 600  | Flood       | 0   | 0   | 0     | 0   |
| Webster (Zone) | 7/11/2005  | 0    | Flood       | 0   | 0   | 0     | 0   |
| Webster Co.    | 4/8/2006   | 1330 | Flood       | 0   | 0   | 500   | 0   |
| Webster Co.    | 12/14/2009 | 2300 | Flood       | 0   | 0   | 3000  | 0   |
| <b>Total</b>   |            |      |             | 0   | 0   | 13500 | 0   |

Source; National Climatic Data Center; Last updated: 2/6/2026.

**Map 2.7 and 2.8: Georgia Flood Events and Flood Losses 1952-2025**



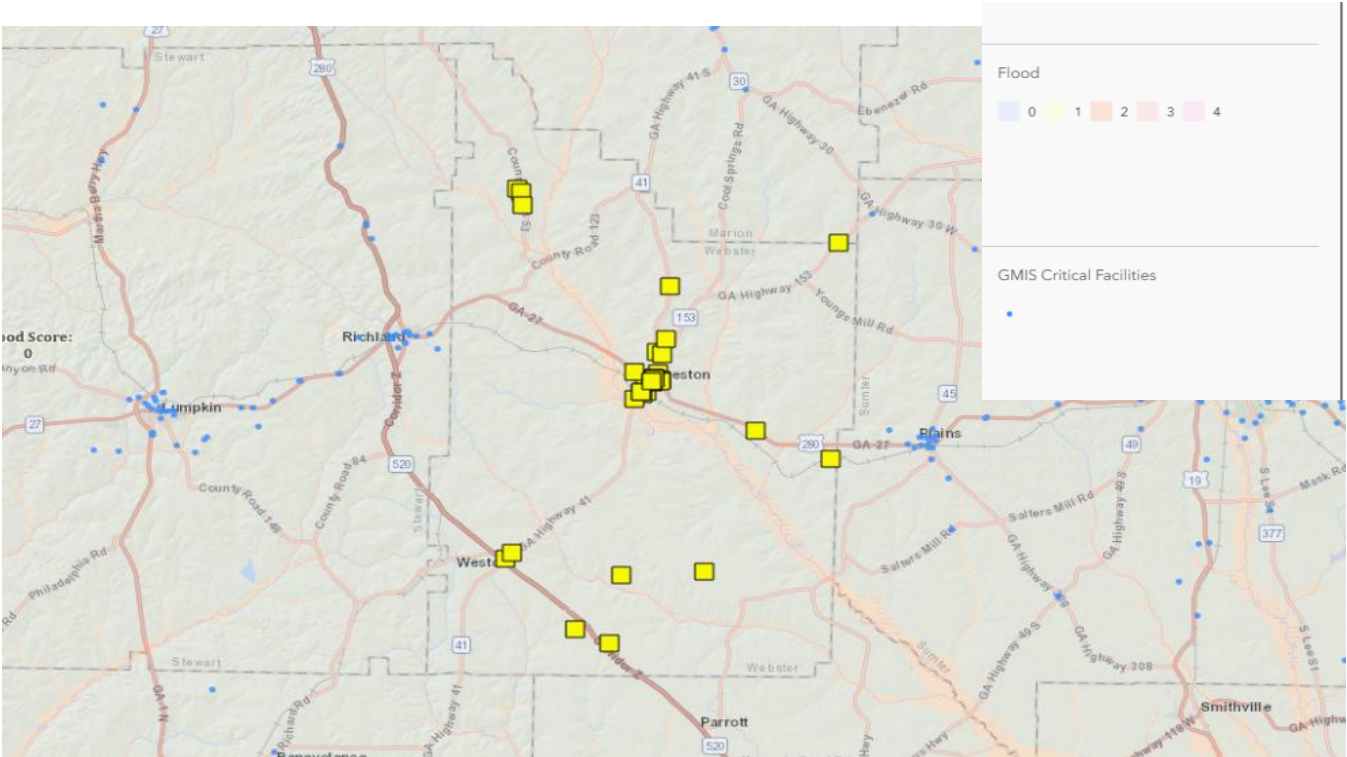
Source: Georgia Hazard Mitigation Strategy 2024

## Community Exposure

Because of proximity to the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts, the community will always be susceptible to the kind of tropical storms that caused widespread flooding in 1994. Fortunately, that was an extreme event. The community is diligent to maintain drainage channels to accommodate flash flood events. The county adopted (NFIP approved) Flood Damage Prevention Ordinances in 2005.

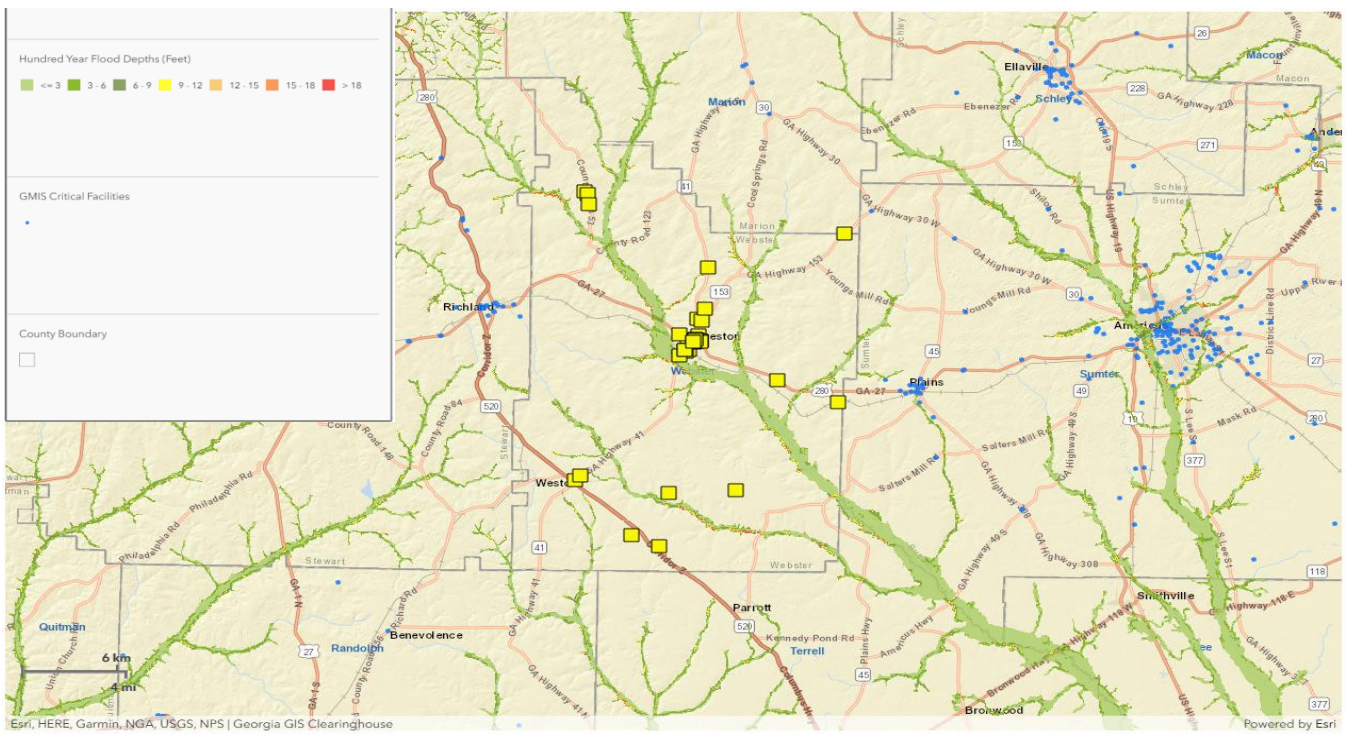
Webster County participates in the National Flood Insurance Program. Although development downstream of the numerous dams in the county is nominal, areas in these dam “shadows” have a potential risk of flooding when impounded waters breach these man-made reservoirs. Enforcement of Wetland Protection Ordinances in the county helps prevent destruction of these natural flood-prevention resources. Aggregate value of the community’s “non-critical” facilities has been estimated for use here; documentation is presented in Appendix A.

**Map 2.9: GMIS Flood Hazard Map Webster County**



Source: GEMA ITOS 2025; See Appendix A for the hazard score key

**Map 2.9: Flood Depth Map Webster County**



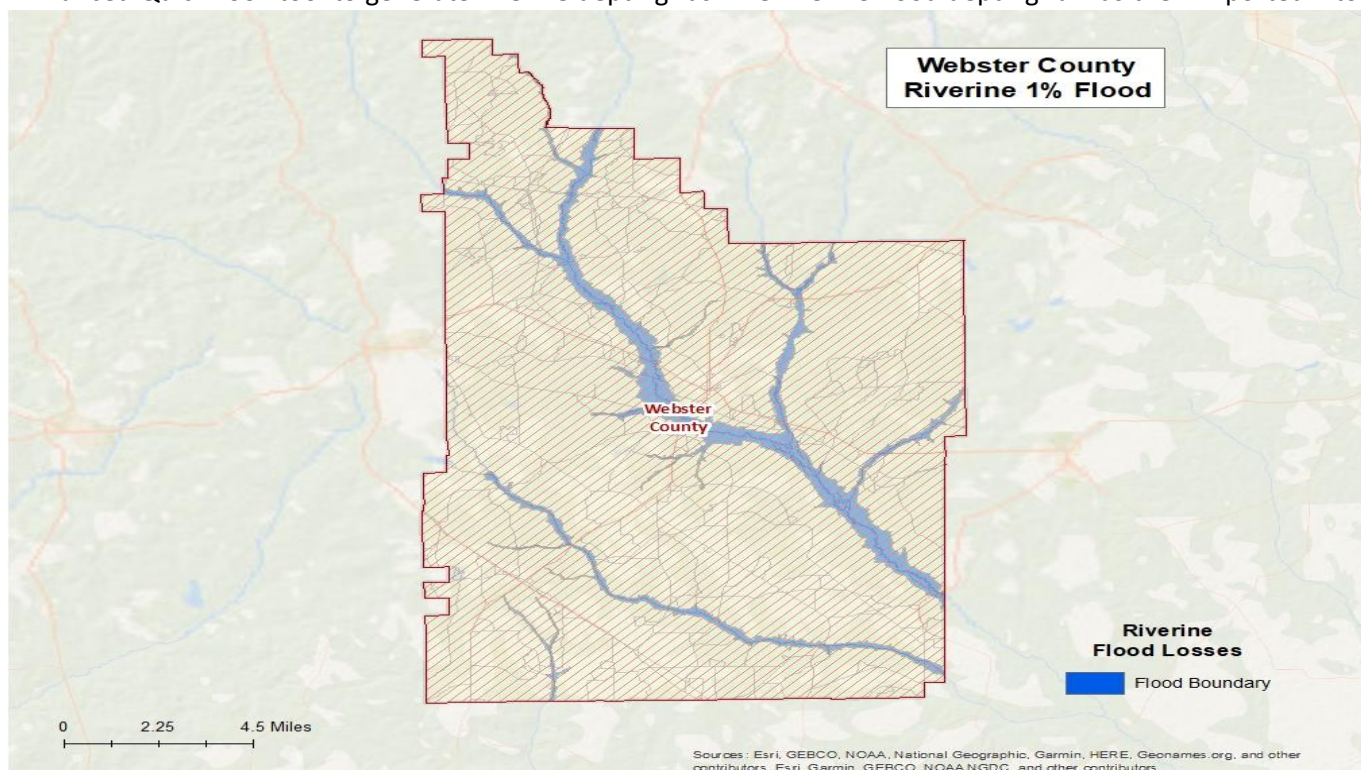
Source: GEMA ITOS 2025; See Appendix A for the hazard score key

| Flood Hazard Map Legend |   |                |                                                |
|-------------------------|---|----------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Score                   |   | Original Value | Description                                    |
|                         | 4 | Floodway       | Floodway (within zone AE)                      |
|                         |   | V              | 1% with Velocity no Base Flood Elevation (BFE) |
|                         |   | VE             | 1% with Velocity BFE                           |
|                         | 3 | A              | 1% Annual Chance no BFE                        |
|                         |   | A99            | 1% Federal flood protection system             |
|                         |   | AE             | 1% has BFE                                     |
|                         |   | AH             | 1% Ponding has BFE                             |
|                         |   | AO             | 1% Sheet Flow has depths                       |
|                         | 2 | AR             | 1% Federal flood protection system             |
|                         |   | X500           | 0.2% Annual Chance                             |
|                         | 1 | ANI            | Area not included in survey                    |
|                         |   | D              | Undetermined but possible                      |
|                         | 0 | UNDES          | Undesignated                                   |
|                         |   | X              | Outside Flood Zones                            |
| <all other values>      |   |                |                                                |

For a complete listing of structures at risk from flooding, please refer to GEMA worksheet #3a in Appendix D.

### Riverine 1% Flood Scenario

Riverine losses were determined from the 1% flood boundaries downloaded from the FEMA Flood Map Service Center in April 2026. The flood boundaries were overlaid with the USGS 10-meter DEM using the HAZUS-MH Enhanced Quick Look tool to generate riverine depth grids. The riverine flood depth grid was then imported into



HAZUS-MH to calculate the riverine flood loss estimates. Figure 6 illustrates the riverine inundation boundary associated with the 1% annual chance.

Figure 8: Riverine 1% Flood Inundation

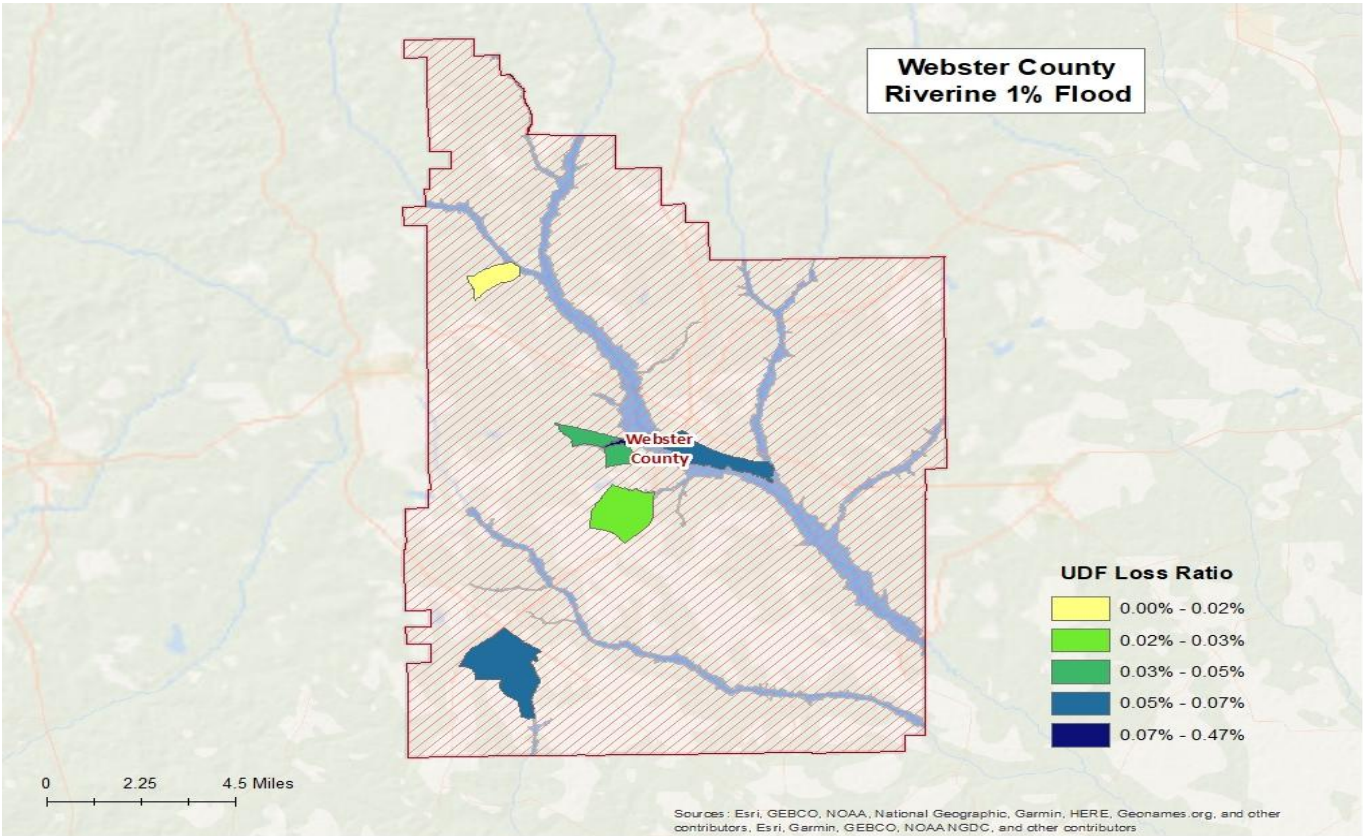
### Riverine 1% Flood Building Damages

Buildings in Webster County are vulnerable to flooding from events equivalent to the 1% riverine flood. The economic and social impacts from a flood of this magnitude can be significant. Table 9 provides a summary of the potential flood-related building damage in Webster County by jurisdiction that might be experienced from the 1% flood. Figure 7 maps the potential loss ratios of total building exposure to losses sustained to buildings from the 1% flood by 2010 census block and Figure 8 illustrates the relationship of building locations to the 1% flood inundation boundary.

Table 2.14: Webster County Riverine 1% Building Losses

| Occupancy      | Total Buildings in the Jurisdiction | Total Buildings Damaged in the Jurisdiction | Total Building Exposure in the Jurisdiction | Total Losses to Buildings in the Jurisdiction | Loss Ratio of Exposed Buildings to Damaged Buildings in the Jurisdiction |
|----------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Webster County |                                     |                                             |                                             |                                               |                                                                          |
| Residential    | 1,441                               | 7                                           | \$88,664,356                                | \$238,280                                     | 0.27%                                                                    |

Figure 9: Webster County Potential Loss Ratios of Total Building Exposure to Losses Sustained to Buildings from the 1% Riverine Flood by 2010 Census Block



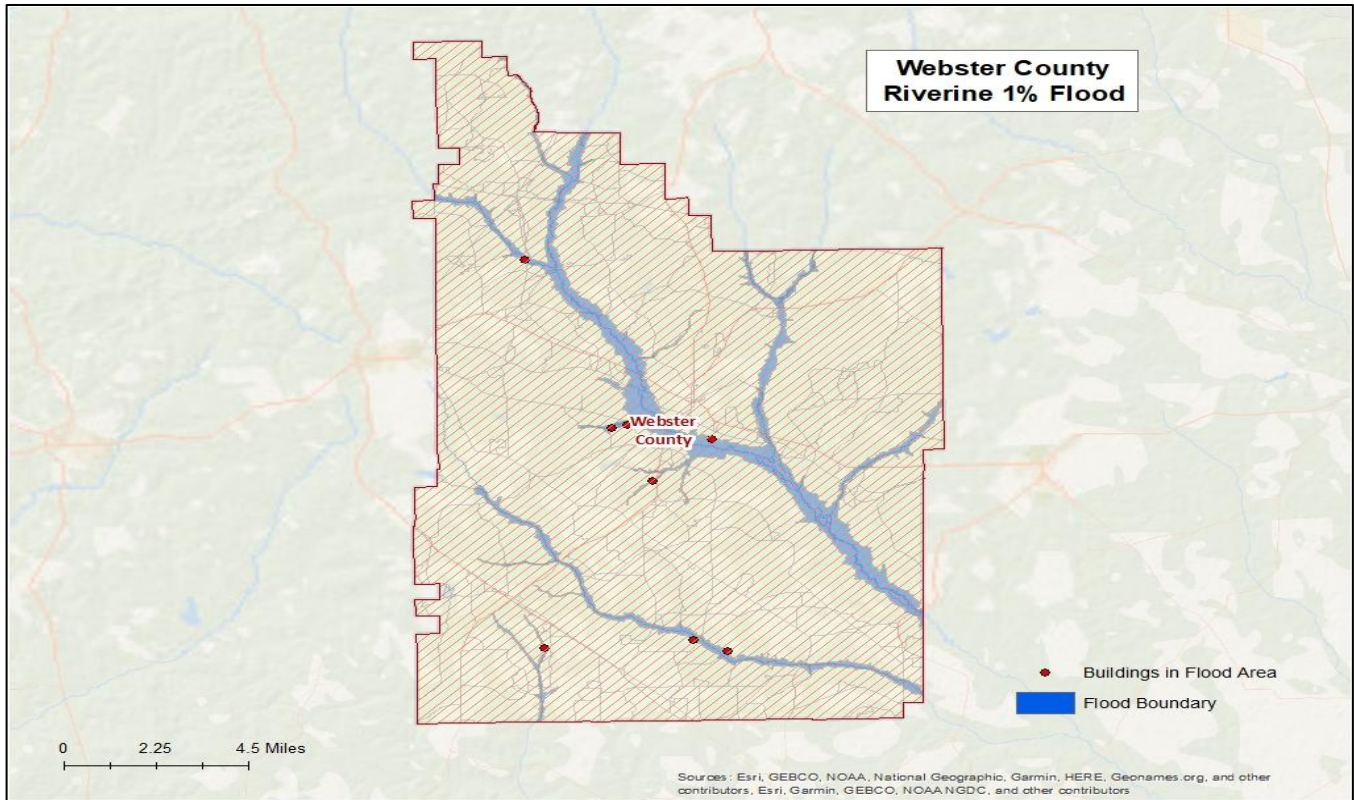


Figure 10: Webster County Damaged Buildings in Riverine Floodplain (1% Flood)

### Riverine 1% Flood Essential Facility Losses

An essential facility may encounter many of the same impacts as other buildings within the flood boundary. These impacts can include structural failure, extensive water damage to the facility and loss of facility functionality (e.g., a damaged police station will no longer be able to serve the community). The analysis identified no essential facility that was subject to damage in the Webster County riverine 1% probability floodplain.

### Riverine 1% Flood Shelter Requirements

HAZUS-MH estimates that the number of households that are expected to be displaced from their homes due to riverine flooding and the associated potential evacuation. The model estimates 36 households might be displaced due to the flood. Displacement includes households evacuated within or very near to the inundated area. Displaced households represent 107 individuals, of which 5 may require short term publicly provided shelter. The results are mapped in Figure 9.

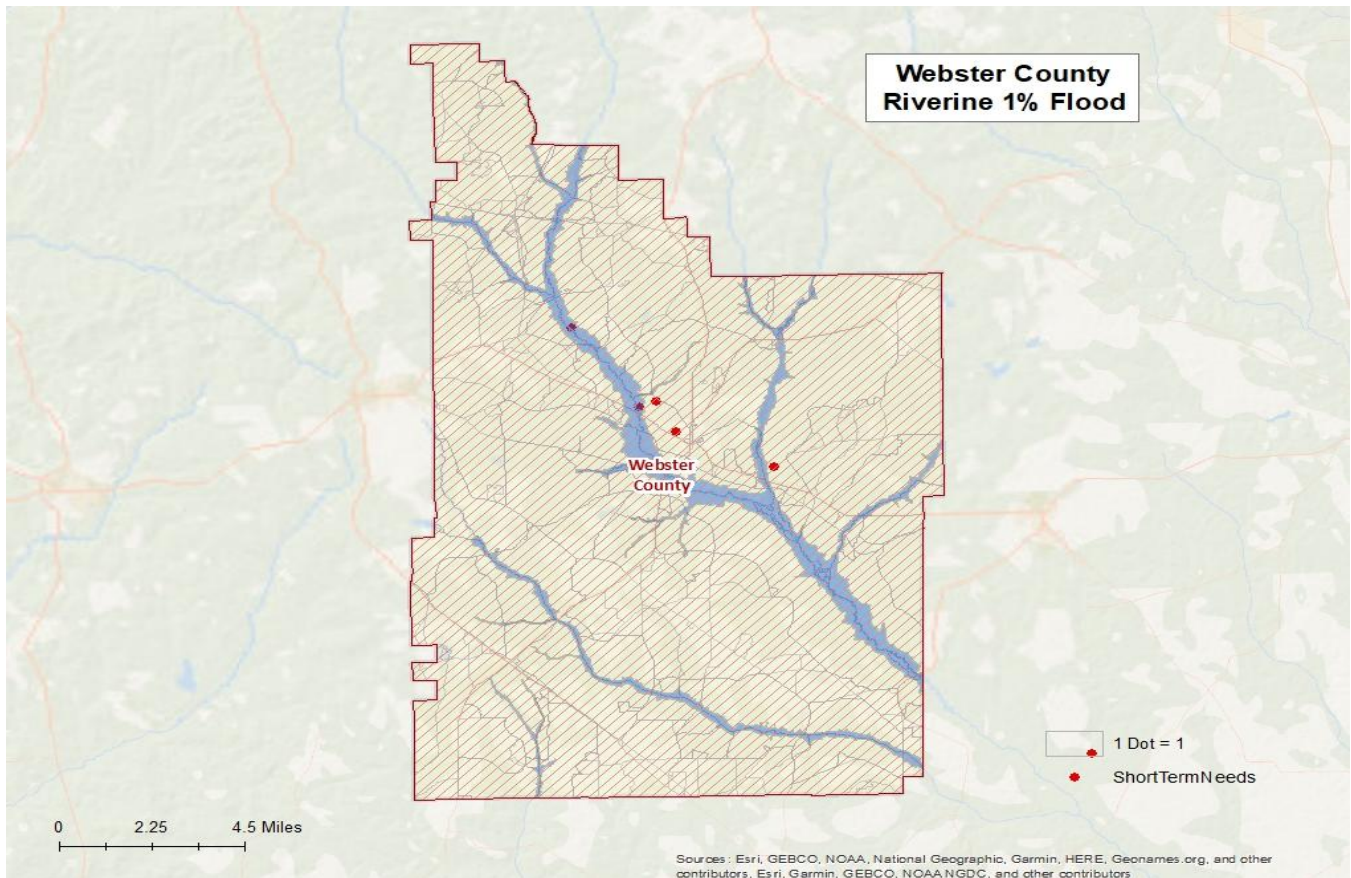


Figure 11: Riverine 1% Estimated Flood Shelter Requirements

### Riverine 1% Flood Debris

HAZUS-MH estimates the amount of debris that will be generated by the flood. The model breaks debris into three general categories:

- Finishes (dry wall, insulation, etc.)
- Structural (wood, brick, etc.)
- Foundations (concrete slab, concrete block, rebar, etc.)

Different types of material handling equipment will be required for each category. Debris definitions applied in HAZUS-MH are unique to the HAZUS-MH model and so do not necessarily conform to other definitions that may be employed in other models or guidelines.

The analysis estimates that an approximate total of 609 tons of debris might be generated: 1) Finishes- 213 tons; 2) Structural – 154 tons; and 3) Foundations 242 tons. The results are mapped in Figure 10.

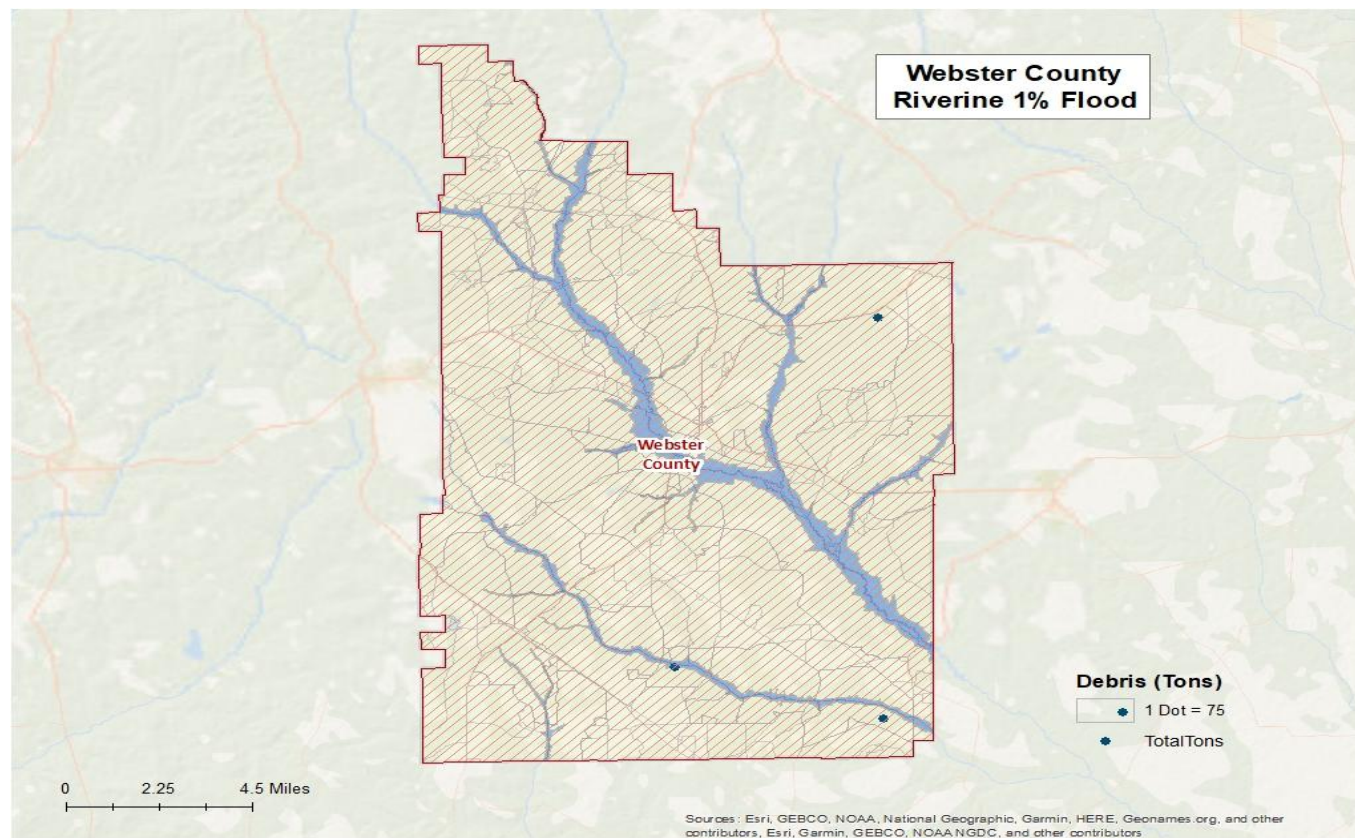


Figure 12: Riverine 1% Flood Debris Weight (Tons)

## Estimate of Potential Losses

Because of the limited and sparse level of development in the community, the potential loss is considered to be relatively limited. None of the community’s critical facilities are believed to be located in floodplains. Hence, no reasonable estimate of potential loss can be made for present purposes. Nevertheless, the community’s combined value including the total estimated structure replacement value (\$31M) and total estimated contents value (\$6M) is \$31.7M. This information can be reviewed in detail in Appendix A. Aggregate value of the community’s “non-critical” facilities has been estimated for use here; documentation is presented in Appendix A. Population, and other demographic data are presented in Appendix B. There are no NFIP repetitive loss properties in Webster County.

## Land Use and Development Trends

The community is very sparsely populated. The 2023 Census credited the community with 2,348 residents. Ninety-five percent of the county is in either agricultural or forest land use. Both incorporated areas also have extensive undeveloped acreage, with over three quarters of total area in agriculture or forest. Conversion of land use is nominal, and no significant shifts in land use and/or development trends are foreseen in the next decade. While periodic flooding does occur, it is usually in undeveloped areas, most commonly downstream of the confluence of the Lanahassee and Kinchafoonee Creeks. Impacts are more aptly described as inconveniences than property damage.

Webster County has adopted the current effective Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs), dated August 18, 2009, and maintained active participation in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). To protect life and property from flooding hazards, Webster County adopted Local Flood Damage Prevention Ordinances with the Chairman responsible for administering the provisions. These duties include:

1. Review proposed development to assure that the permit requirements of this ordinance have been satisfied.
2. Review proposed development to assure that all necessary permits have been received from governmental agencies from which approval is required by Federal or State law, including section 404 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972, 33 U.S.C. 1334. Require that copies of such permits be provided and maintained on file.
3. Review all permit applications to determine whether proposed building sites will be reasonably safe from flooding.
4. When Base Flood Elevation data or floodway data have not been provided in accordance with Article 2 Section B, then the C.B.O. shall obtain, review and reasonably utilize any base flood elevation and floodway data available from a Federal, State or other sources in order to administer the provisions of Article 4.
5. Review and record the actual elevation in relation to mean sea level (or highest adjacent grade) of the lowest floor, including basement, of all new or substantially improved structures in accordance with Article 3, Section B (2).
6. Review and record the actual elevation, in relation to mean sea level to which any new or substantially improved structures have been flood-proofed, in accordance with Article 3, Section B (2).
7. When floodproofing is utilized for a structure, the C.B.O. shall obtain certification of design criteria from a registered professional engineer or architect in accordance with Article 3(B)(l)(c) and Article 4(B)(2) or (D)(2).
8. Make substantial damage determinations following a flood event or any other event that causes damage to structures in flood hazard areas.
9. Notify adjacent communities and the Georgia Department of Natural Resources prior to any alteration or relocation of a watercourse and submit evidence of such notification to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).
10. For any altered or relocated watercourse, submit engineering data/analysis within six (6) months to the FEMA to ensure accuracy of community flood maps through the Letter of Map Revision process. Assure flood carrying capacity of any altered or relocated watercourse is maintained.
11. Where interpretation is needed as to the exact location of boundaries of the Areas of Special Flood Hazard (for example, where there appears to be a conflict between a mapped boundary and actual field conditions) the C.B.O shall make the necessary interpretation. Any person contesting the location of the boundary shall be given a reasonable opportunity to appeal the interpretation as provided in this Ordinance.
12. All records pertaining to the provisions of this ordinance shall be maintained in the office of the .B.O. and shall be open for public inspection.

For the substantial damage portion of the flood prevention ordinance, the C.B.O. will utilize tax assessor's data to determine market value for all damaged structures. Substantial damage will be determined by assessing whether the repairs needed to bring a structure back to pre-damage conditions exceed 50% of the market value of the structure. If so, then the structure will be determined to be of "substantial damage." This determination will be communicated to the property owners, and any appeals will be held in accordance with established appeals

procedures for permit applications. Once appeals are resolved, permitting will commence and inspections will occur as normally scheduled. Any technical assistance needed will be requested from the State of Georgia and/or the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

### **MultiJurisdictional Flood Differences**

The potential for flooding is most significant in the unincorporated county which is enforcing flooding.

### **Hazard Risk and Vulnerability Summary**

The community will always be at risk of flooding because of the wide, flat plains along creeks and from torrential rainfall caused by tropical storm activity. The community's most significant exposure to flooding is along Kinchafoonee Creek which impacts the unincorporated area of the community. This plan has occurred since the previous Webster County Hazard Mitigation Plan was updated. As of 2026, there have been no changes in codes, ordinances, or development patterns that would affect the risk that the county faces from this hazard. Mitigation projects completed since 2015 include construction of a new fire station, purchase of emergency generators, water system capacity increases, and an EOC facility in the new Board of Commissioners' office.

## DROUGHT

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### Hazard Description

A drought is a period when there is not enough water to support agricultural, urban, or environmental water needs. A drought usually refers to an extended period of below normal rainfall but can also be caused by drying bores or lakes, or anything that reduces the amount of available liquid water. Although what is considered "normal" varies from one region to another; droughts are a threat of nearly all the world's climatic regions. In addition, the effects of drought vary depending on agricultural, urban, and environmental water needs. Droughts are most harmful during the planting and growing season in agricultural areas. A drought can result in extensive damage to crops or prevent their successful growth.

The hydrologic imbalance is caused when the evaporation and transpiration of soils and plants is greater than the precipitation. Lack or insufficient rain for an extended period leads to water shortages, crop damage, stream flow reduction, and depletion of groundwater and soil moisture. It can even upset the hydrologic cycle and impact fish, wildlife, and plant species. Drought can therefore have a serious economic impact on a community and its population, including food shortages.

In Georgia, droughts affect municipal and industrial water supplies, stream-water quality, recreation at reservoirs, navigation, agricultural and forest resources. Since drought conditions make natural fuels (grass, brush, trees, dead vegetation, etc.) more fire-prone, drought is also a key factor in wildfire development.

### Hazard Profile

Drought is typically a widespread weather pattern affecting a much larger area than any single community. Critical facilities are not directly susceptible to adverse impacts of such an event. Generally, the population is not at risk from physical harm, except in the latter stages of a severe drought. Over the past decade the historical record documented five drought events. No deaths or injuries were recorded. Based on straight-line extrapolation from the historical record as documented herein, the community has a 21% chance of experiencing a drought in any given year (Hazard Frequency Table-Appendix A).

**Table 2.15: Webster County Drought Events 2000-2025**

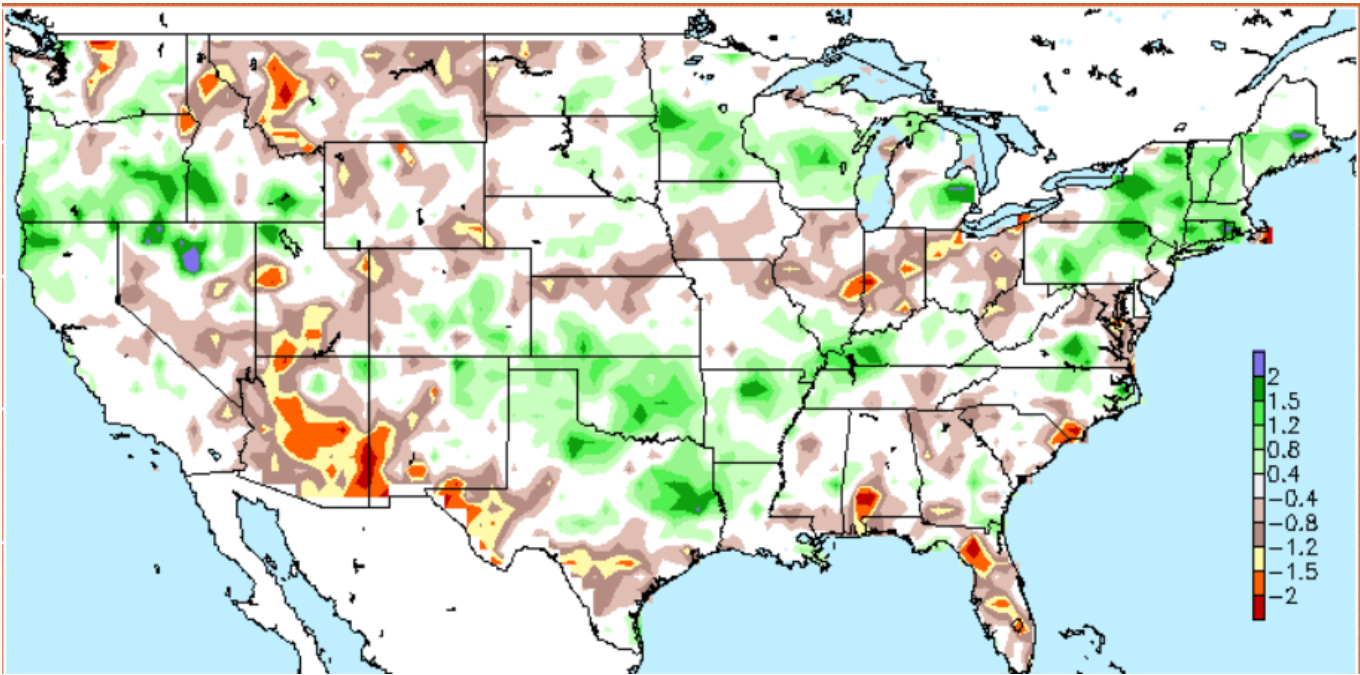
| Location       | Date      | Time | Type    | Dth | Inj | PrD | CrD     |
|----------------|-----------|------|---------|-----|-----|-----|---------|
| Webster (Zone) | 9/1/1997  | 0    | Drought | 0   | 0   | 0   | 1670000 |
| Webster (Zone) | 5/1/1999  | 0    | Drought | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0       |
| Webster (Zone) | 8/1/1999  | 0    | Drought | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0       |
| Webster (Zone) | 2/1/2000  | 0    | Drought | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0       |
| Webster (Zone) | 4/1/2000  | 0    | Drought | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0       |
| Webster (Zone) | 5/1/2000  | 0    | Drought | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0       |
| Webster (Zone) | 6/1/2000  | 0    | Drought | 0   | 0   | 0   | 2850000 |
| Webster (Zone) | 7/1/2000  | 0    | Drought | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0       |
| Webster (Zone) | 10/1/2000 | 0    | Drought | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0       |
| Webster (Zone) | 10/1/2001 | 0    | Drought | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0       |
| Webster (Zone) | 12/1/2001 | 0    | Drought | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0       |
| Webster (Zone) | 4/1/2002  | 0    | Drought | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0       |
| Webster (Zone) | 8/1/2002  | 0    | Drought | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0       |
| Webster (Zone) | 1/1/2003  | 0    | Drought | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0       |
| Webster (Zone) | 3/1/2004  | 0    | Drought | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0       |
| Webster (Zone) | 5/1/2007  | 0    | Drought | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0       |
| Webster (Zone) | 9/1/2007  | 0    | Drought | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0       |
| Webster (Zone) | 10/1/2007 | 0    | Drought | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0       |
| Webster (Zone) | 11/1/2007 | 0    | Drought | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0       |
| Webster (Zone) | 12/1/2007 | 0    | Drought | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0       |
| Webster (Zone) | 9/1/2011  | 0    | Drought | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0       |
| Webster (Zone) | 10/1/2016 | 0    | Drought | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0       |
| Webster (Zone) | 11/1/2016 | 0    | Drought | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0       |
| Webster (Zone) | 12/1/2016 | 0    | Drought | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0       |
| Webster (Zone) | 10/8/2019 | 0    | Drought | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0       |
| <b>Total:</b>  |           |      |         | 0   | 0   | 0   | 4520000 |

Source: National Climatic Data Center 2026; Last entry since 2/6/2026

According to the NOAA information listed above, recurrence intervals for droughts in Webster County are every 3.04 years, depending on severity, with a 32.89% frequency rate.

The Standardized Precipitation Index (SPI) is a drought index used by many planners because of its versatility. The SPI is an effective measure of drought extent or magnitude based on the probability of precipitation during a specific time frame. It can provide early warnings of drought as well as assess the severity of drought impacts. Indicators include precipitation deficits on groundwater, reservoir storage, soil moisture, snowpack, and stream flow.

**Map 2.10: Standardized Precipitation Index, July 2023 – July 2025**

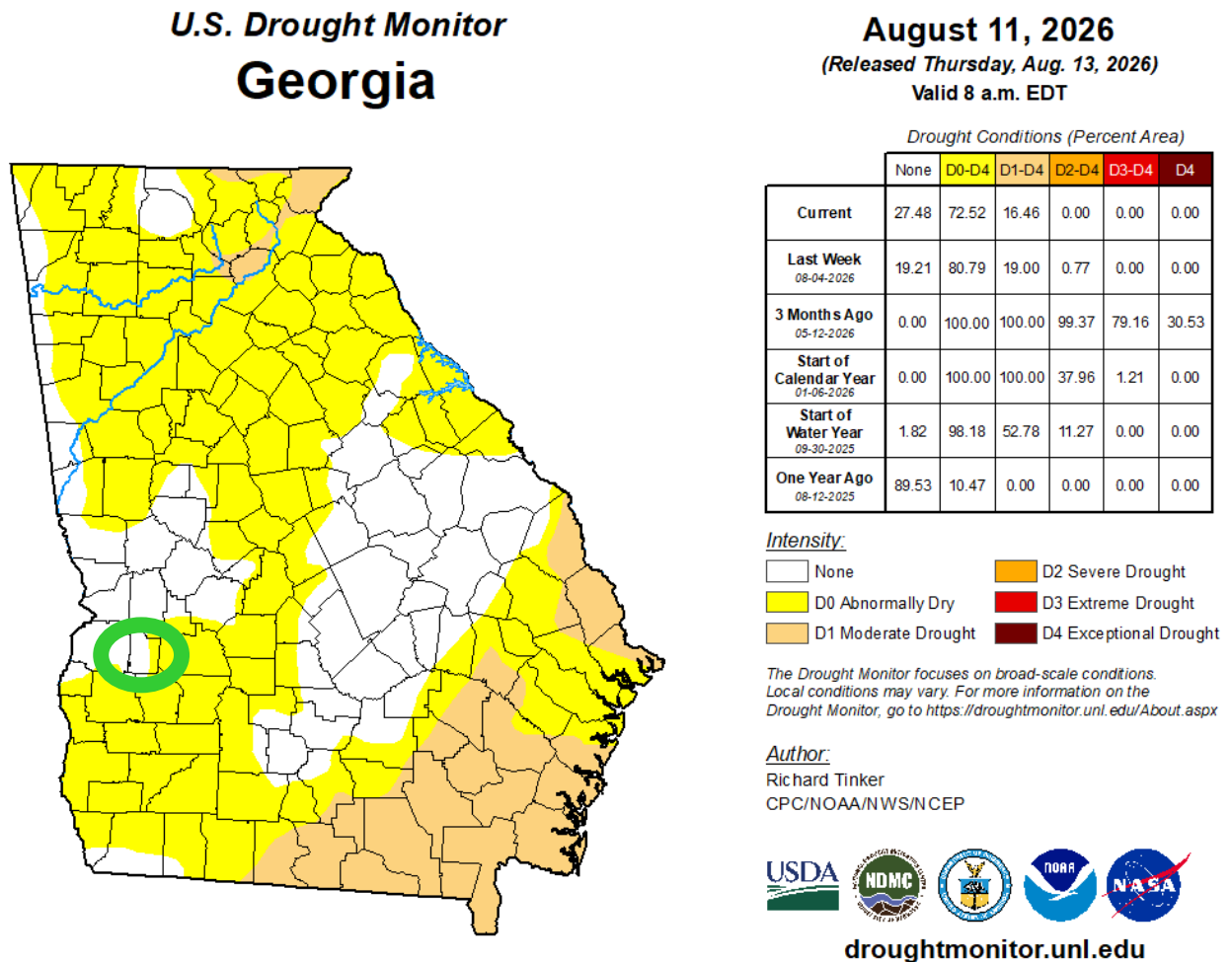


This is an example of an SPI map of the continental United States. This map shows that drought conditions can range from a score of +2.00, which is exceptionally wet, to an SPI score of -2.0 or less, indicating exceptionally dry conditions. Notably, Georgia has experienced -2 conditions on the SPI index. Between July 2023 and July 2025, southwest Georgia has experienced -0.8 and 1.2 (near normal to moderately dry) conditions.

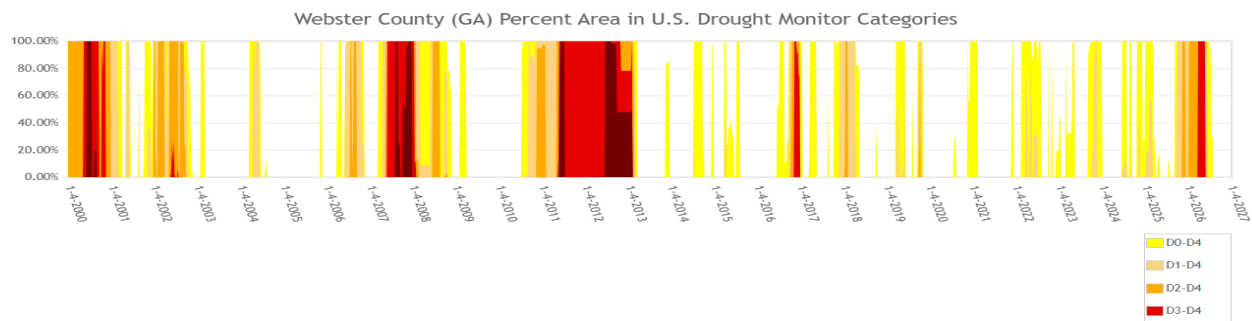
Because of the slow rate of onset and the long duration of droughts in Georgia, long-term management and mitigation measures are appropriate. The Environmental Protection Division (EPD) of Georgia’s Department of Natural Resources (DNR) publishes the Georgia Drought Management Rules, which address both pre-drought mitigation strategies and drought response strategies. Refer to the Drought Management Rules for more details on drought assessments for the State of Georgia.

| SPI Score      | Condition      |
|----------------|----------------|
| +2 and above   | Extremely wet  |
| +1.5 to +1.99  | Very wet       |
| +1.0 to +1.49  | Moderately wet |
| -0.99 to +0.99 | Near normal    |
| -1.0 to -1.49  | Moderately dry |
| -1.5 to -1.99  | Severely dry   |
| -2.0 and less  | Extremely dry  |

Map 2.11: Map Showing Current Drought Conditions in Georgia, August 11, 2026

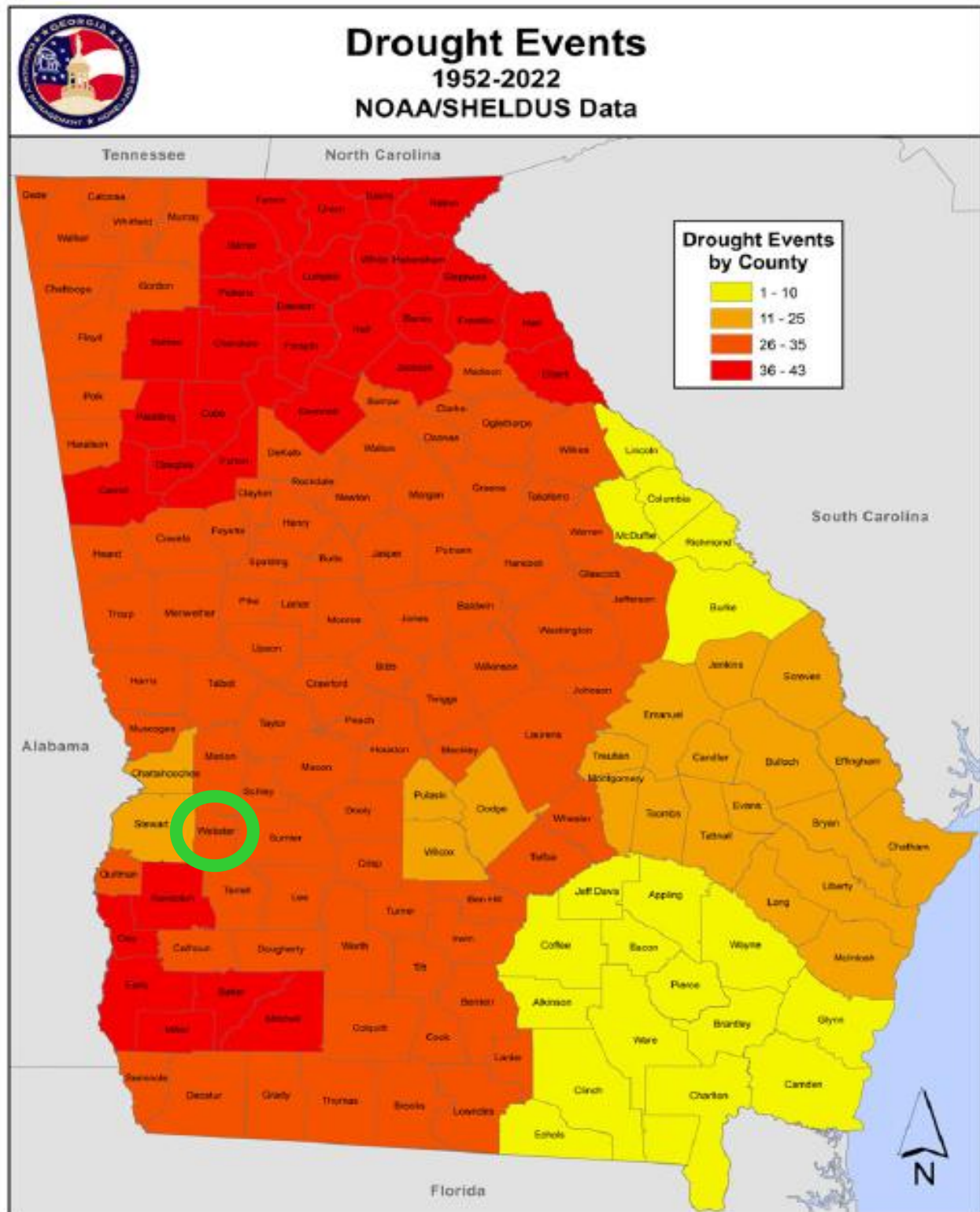


Graphic 2.3: Drought Monitor Time Series for Webster County



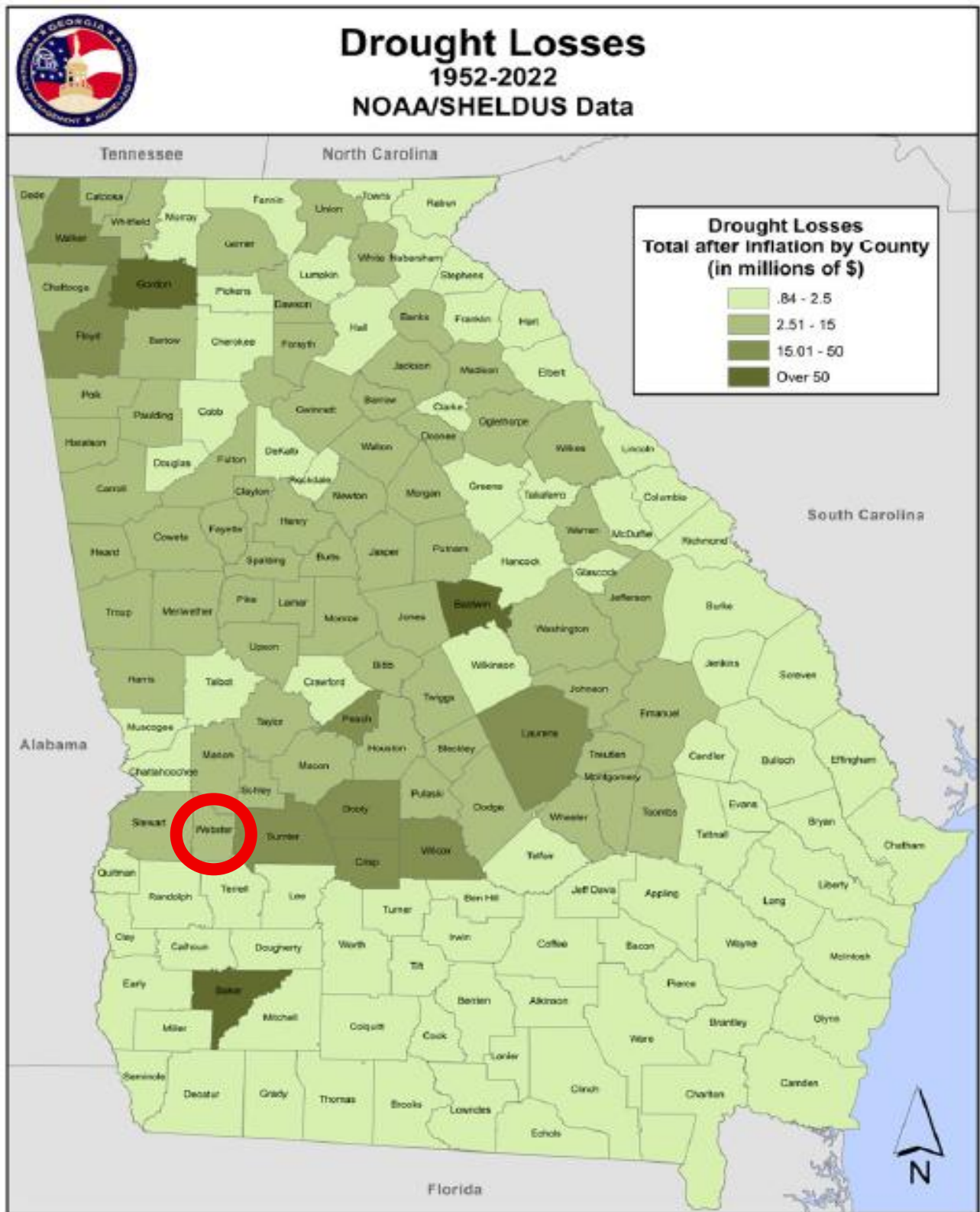
Source: Drought Monitor

Map 2.12: Drought Events in Georgia 1952-2022



Source: Georgia Hazard Mitigation Strategy 2024

Map 2.13: Drought Losses in Georgia 1952-2022



Source: Georgia Hazard Mitigation Strategy 2024

## **Community Exposure**

The nature of drought is such that the entire community is affected, primarily economically. Generally, neither the population nor critical facilities are at risk of physical damage, except in the latter stages of a severe drought. Under such conditions, available water resources may not be sufficient for human needs, or water pressure may not be sufficient to fight fire, the risk of which increases in forested areas during periods of drought. The community's non-critical infrastructure is generally not susceptible to adverse effects of drought.

## **Estimate of Potential Losses**

Crops are most directly affected by drought, and their loss can result in a significant economic burden on the local economy. In this sense, the local economy is at significant risk because of the relatively small percentage of farms in the county with irrigation systems. Generally, neither the population nor critical facilities are at risk of physical harm, except in the latter stages of a severe drought. Drought typically does not increase the risk of damage to critical facilities, the majority of which are concentrated in the cities and supplied by the deep-water wells of the municipal system. These deep wells are generally not affected until the later or "critical" stages of drought. Nevertheless, the estimated cost of critical facility replacement (\$31M) and content value (\$6M) amounts to a total of \$31.7M (Appendix A). The community's non-critical infrastructure is generally not susceptible to adverse effects of drought.

## **Land Use and Development Trends**

Drought conditions typically affect areas much larger than the local community. Land use and development trends do not influence the risk posed by this hazard.

## **Multi-Jurisdictional Drought Differences**

Webster County is a Unified Government. The graphics included in this document display the full distribution of the county's critical facilities.

## **Hazard Risk and Vulnerability Summary**

Drought does not have a sudden, violent impact on a community characteristic of a storm. A significant reduction from normal rainfall levels will first be felt by the agricultural community, and because agriculture contributes significantly to the local economy, whatever affects agricultural production has a direct and immediate effect on the well-being of the community. Because conventional agriculture is so dependent on water, the community's front-line of defense against the adverse economic impacts of drought rests with the farmer. With a percentage return on economic investment among the lowest of any economic sector, the farmer is responding to high production costs by converting to moisture conservation practices, such as minimum-till and no-till production. This is helping to maximize the use of available water supplies. This planning has occurred since the previous Webster County Hazard Mitigation Plan was updated. As of 2026, there have been no changes in codes, ordinances, or development patterns that would affect the risk that the county faces from this hazard.

# EXTREME TEMPERATURES

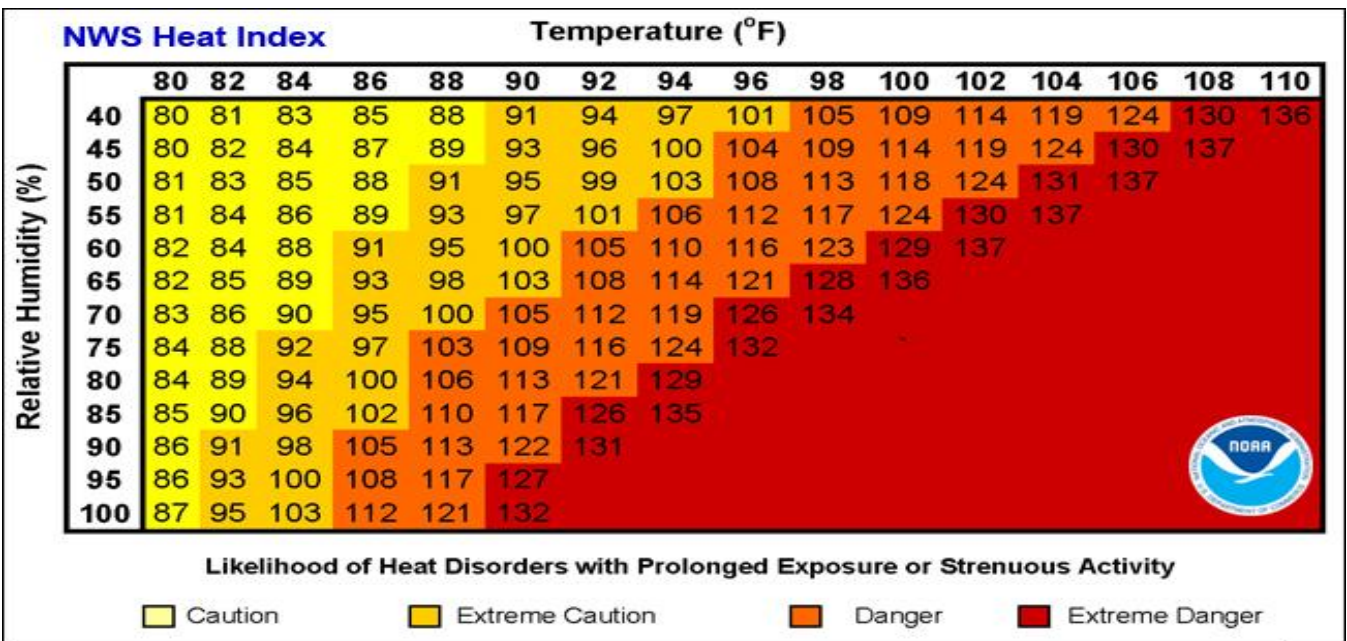
## Hazard Description

Extreme temperatures - both hot and cold - can pose a significant threat to an underprepared population. This is particularly true in areas where a community has a significant number of elderly, of small children, of people with disabilities, and those living within a low socioeconomic status.

The term extreme heat can be subjective to a degree. FEMA, in their "Mitigation Ideas" publication defines extreme heat as "the condition where temperatures consistently stay ten degrees or more above a region's average high temperature for an extended period." The key to this definition is that extreme heat is relative to the average temperature, regardless of the time of year. For example, the National Center for Environmental Information (NCEI) records heat events in Georgia with 60- and 70-degree temperatures in December and January, simply because they are significantly higher than the average temperature for that time of year.

According to [www.ready.gov/heat](http://www.ready.gov/heat), FEMA also offers another definition of extreme heat: "In most of the United States, extreme heat is defined as a long period (2 to 3 days) of high heat and humidity with temperatures above 90 degrees." This definition can also lead to some subjectivity in the term "extreme." For example, people that live in the southern parts of the country are more adapted to temperatures in the 90s and 100s than people that live in the more northern tiers. This is not to say those temperatures are still not dangerous. Notably, in recent years, more heat related deaths have occurred in the southern tier states than the northern tiers. The National Weather Service, however, focuses on "Excessive Heat," defining it as heat indices of 105 degrees or more using a combination of temperature and humidity as a "real feel." Graphic XX below shows how the heat index is determined based on temperature and humidity.

Graphic 2.4: National Weather Service Heat Index



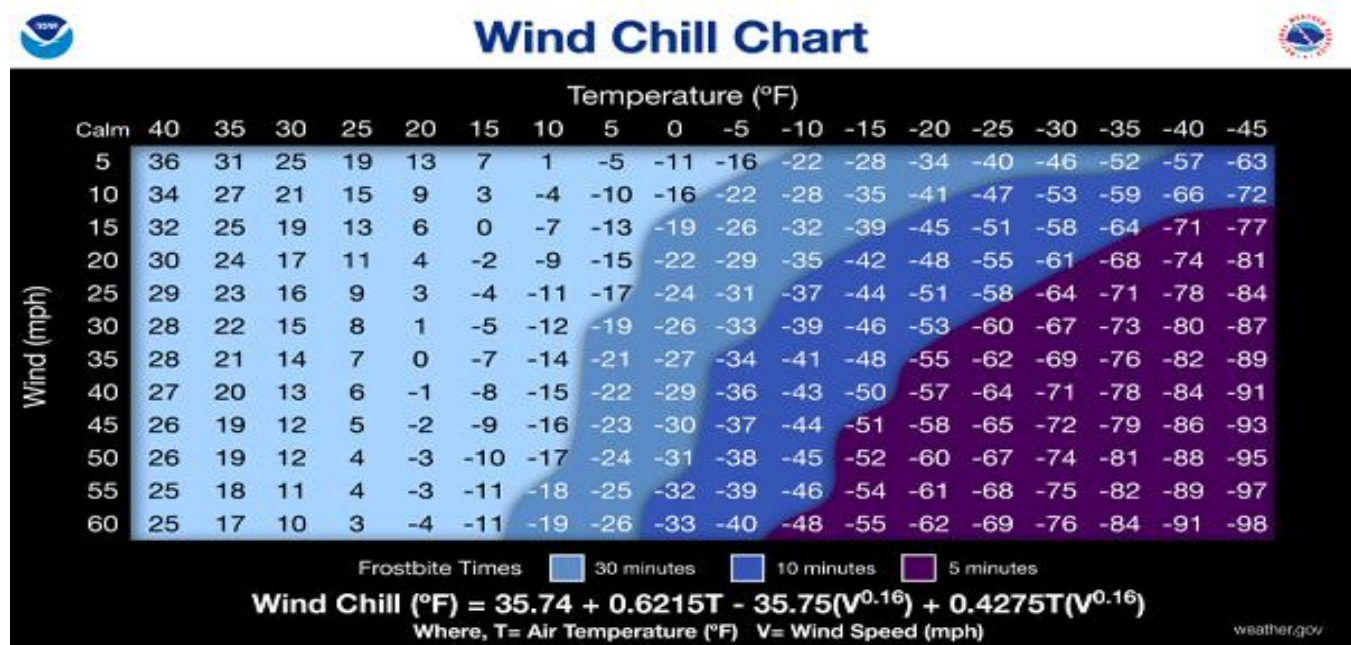
Just as extreme heat can be subjective, so can extreme cold. Severe winter storms bring the threat of ice and snow. There are many types of frozen precipitation that could create a severe winter weather event. Freezing rain consists

of super cooled falling liquid precipitation freezing on contact with the surface when temperatures are below freezing. This results in ice glazing on exposed surfaces including buildings, roads, and power lines, Sleet is easily discernable from freezing rain in that the precipitation freezes before hitting the surface. Often this sleet bounces when hitting the surface and does not adhere to the surface. However, sleet can compound into sufficient depths to pose some threat to motorists and pedestrians.

A heavy accumulation of ice, which is often accompanied by high winds, can devastate infrastructure and vegetation. Destructiveness in the southern states is often amplified due to the lack of preparedness and response measures. Also, the infrastructure was not designed to withstand certain severe weather conditions such as weight build-up from snow and ice, Often, sidewalks and streets become extremely dangerous to pedestrians and motorists. Primary industries, such as farming and fishing, suffer losses through winter seasons that produce extreme temperatures and precipitation.

The National Weather Service has attempted to quantify extreme cold by using wind chill data much like they utilize the heat index to attempt to quantify extreme heat. In 2001, the National Weather Service implemented the Wind Chill Temperature (WCT) index to more accurately calculate how cold air feels on human skin. It is the temperature it “feels like” outside and is based on the rate of heat loss from exposed skin caused by the effects of wind and cold. As the wind increases, the body is cooled at a faster rate causing the skin temperature to drop. Wind Chill does not impact inanimate objects like car radiators and exposed water pipes, because these objects cannot cool below the actual air temperature. Prolonged and/or unprotected exposure to extreme cold can be detrimental to people and animals leading to frostbite, hypothermia, and even death. Graphic 2.5 below shows how the wind chill index is determined based on temperature and wind gust.

**Graphic 2.5: National Weather Service Wind Chill Chart**



## Hazard Profile

In terms of impacts from Extreme Heat and Cold events, the built environment is not generally susceptible to damage, aside from taxing power systems. The primary risks are to the human population by injury or death. As

seen in Table 2.16 below, Webster County experienced 11-20 Heat Events between 1962-2022; however, there were no reported deaths or injuries in any excessive heat or cold events reported.

A search of the National Climatic Data Center of recorded weather events revealed four extreme heat events and ten extreme cold events in Webster County's historic record. The recent worldwide trend in extreme weather patterns and global warming, in conjunction with local demographics and general climate patterns that increase community exposure, are, in the aggregate, interpreted as increasing the probability that Webster County will experience extreme heat and cold events. Also, the climate becomes subtropical during summer with high temperatures and high humidity. The situation is considered extreme when temperatures reach 100+ for an extended period, while the situation is considered extreme when temperatures are below freezing.

The average annual temperature in Webster County is about 65° Fahrenheit, and monthly averages in winter are near 50° in December and January, with mid- winter temperatures being 38° to 60° Fahrenheit. The period when freezing can be expected to average almost 90 days in length and usually extends from around mid-November to late March.

As a rule, ice storms have a more devastating impact than snowstorms. Ice storms bring down power lines and tree limbs and power outages are common. Rural residents may be without power for up to a week, while people in more populated areas may go 24 hours without power. Snowfall can range from light (less than 2 inches) to heavy (15 inches or greater).

**Table 2.16: Webster County Extreme Temperatures Events 1950-2026**

| County/Zone                  | Date       | Time | Type                    | DHT | Inj | PrD | CrD |
|------------------------------|------------|------|-------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Webster (Zone)               | 4/9/2000   | 500  | Extreme Cold/Wind Chill | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   |
| Webster (Zone)               | 6/7/2000   | 500  | Extreme Cold/Wind Chill | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   |
| Webster (Zone)               | 10/8/2000  | 0    | Extreme Cold/Wind Chill | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   |
| Webster (Zone)               | 12/1/2000  | 0    | Extreme Cold/Wind Chill | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   |
| Webster (Zone)               | 9/26/2001  | 0    | Extreme Cold/Wind Chill | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   |
| Webster (Zone)               | 10/27/2001 | 0    | Extreme Cold/Wind Chill | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   |
| Webster (Zone)               | 2/26/2002  | 1800 | Extreme Cold/Wind Chill | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   |
| Webster (Zone)               | 3/1/2002   | 0    | Extreme Cold/Wind Chill | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   |
| Webster (Zone)               | 9/3/2002   | 1200 | Excessive Heat          | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   |
| Webster (Zone)               | 1/11/2003  | 0    | Extreme Cold/Wind Chill | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   |
| Webster (Zone)               | 1/23/2003  | 800  | Extreme Cold/Wind Chill | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   |
| Webster (Zone)               | 1/28/2005  | 2000 | Winter Storm            | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   |
| Webster (Zone)               | 8/1/2007   | 0    | Excessive Heat          | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   |
| Webster (Zone)               | 6/29/2012  | 0    | Excessive Heat          | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   |
| Webster (Zone)               | 7/1/2012   | 0    | Excessive Heat          | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   |
| Webster (Zone)               | 1/28/2014  | 2200 | Winter Storm            | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   |
| Webster (Zone)               | 1/17/2018  | 400  | Winter Weather          | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   |
| <b>Total</b>                 |            |      |                         | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   |
| <b>Last Entry: 2/26/2026</b> |            |      |                         |     |     |     |     |

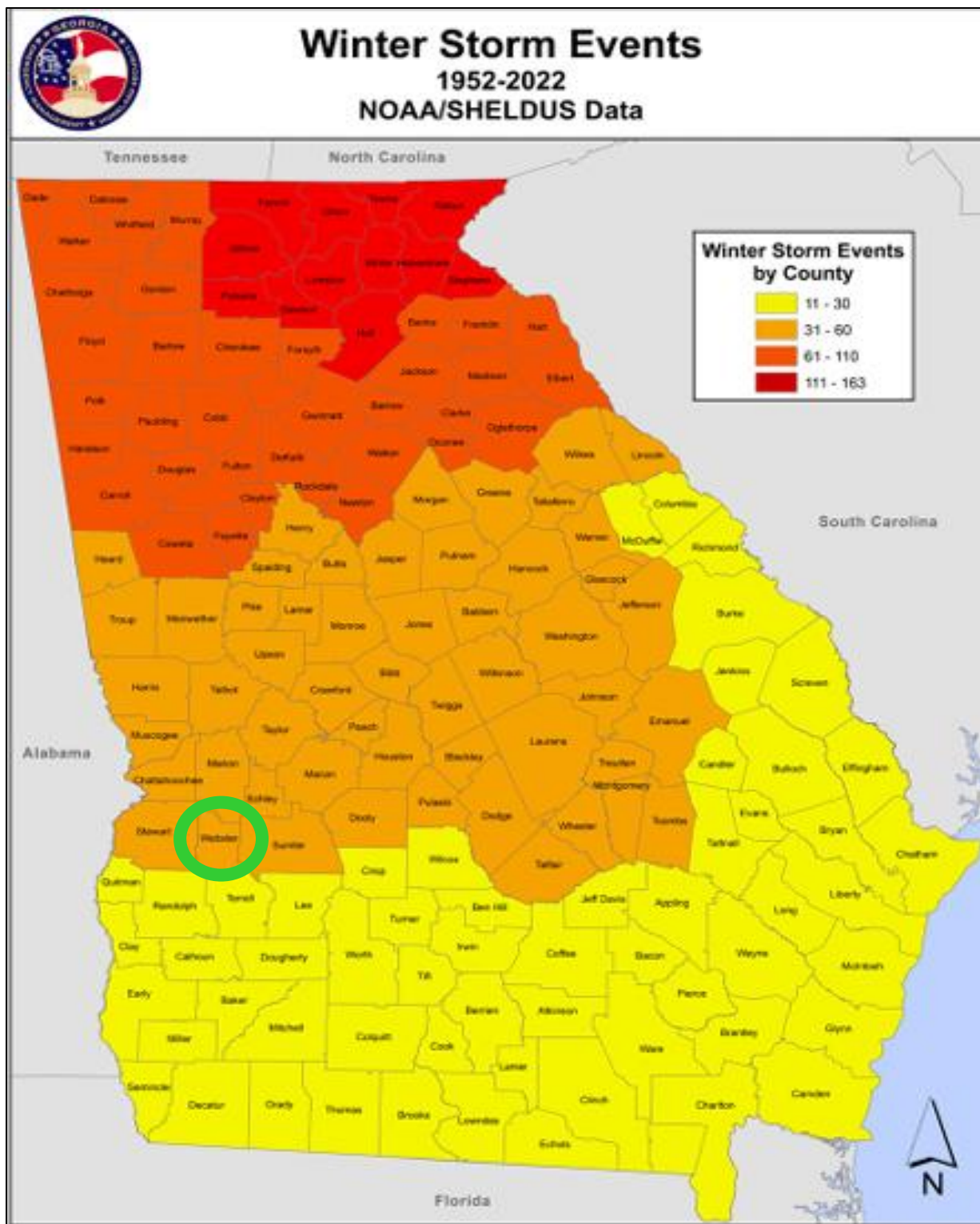
Source: National Climatic Data Center 2026; Last entry since 2/6/2026

According to the Hazard Frequency Table in Appendix A the historic recurrence interval of an extreme temperature event is approximately one every 4.75 years and the historic frequency states that there is 21.05% chance that an extreme weather event will occur in Webster County in a given year.

Source: National Climatic Data Center 2024



Map 2.15: Winter Storm Events in Georgia 1952-2022



Source: National Climatic Data Center 2024

## **Community Exposure**

Cold-related effects on the built environment are nominal, especially single events. The impacts of an extreme cold event are in large part determined by the social, economic, demographic, and housing characteristics of the population. Research of 29 socioeconomic variables referenced in the 2024 Georgia Hazard Mitigation Strategy, Standard and Enhanced Plan documented uneven capacities across communities for preparedness and response and indicates a community's capabilities to recover from such disasters. Those numerous variables can be consolidated into six broad categories: wealth, race, age, ethnicity, special needs populations and gender. The result of the statewide assessment of these variables was that among the state's 159 counties, Webster County was categorized as having a high social vulnerability to an extreme heat or cold event.

Severe winter storm events of longer duration than the historic record documents could result in significant injury, death, and property damage. Relative to the state, the community has disproportionately larger elderly (65+) and lower income populations; two segments of the general population are more prone to weather-related illness and injury. The elderly are generally less able to resist cold weather stress, and lower income residents are more often inadequately housed. The more extreme the winter storm, the greater the risk of house fires because of extra effort exerted to combat the cold. Although it is not unusual for some property to be damaged by severe winter storms, critical facilities are generally not seriously threatened.

## **Estimate of Potential Losses**

Winter storms are primarily a threat to residents, as critical facilities are not particularly susceptible. The potential for crop loss is difficult to estimate without knowing which of a number of variables to apply. A reliable estimation of deaths and injuries is impossible to develop in absence of specifying event conditions; primarily, the range of temperature extreme and duration of the event. Nevertheless, the estimated cost of critical facility replacement (\$31M) and content value (\$6M) amounts to a total of \$31.7M (Appendix A).

## **Land Use and Development Trends**

Local land use and development patterns do not influence community exposure to this hazard.

## **Multi-Jurisdictional Differences**

Webster County is a Unified Government. The graphics included in this document display the full distribution of the county's critical facilities.

## **Hazard Risk and Vulnerability**

Incidents of extreme temperatures — both hot and cold — pose a significant threat to the citizens Of Webster County. Webster County's geographical location increases the likelihood of extreme temperature events with extreme heat events generally considered to be more likely. However, the lack of direct preparation for extreme cold events could lead to greater direct impacts.

Winter storms, which can include freezing rain, sleet, or snow, typically afford communities some advance warning, which is different from many other severe weather phenomena. The National Weather Service issues winter storm watches, advisories, and warnings as much as a day before the storm's impacts begin. Unfortunately, communities in the Southern United States are oftentimes not equipped to handle winter storms due to their relative infrequent nature, Webster County HMPC recognizes the potential threats winter storms could have on the community and have identified specific mitigation actions as a result.

## WILDFIRES

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### Hazard Description

Fires are one of the most common and widespread of all natural disasters besides floods. Wildfires are a sweeping and destructive conflagration, especially in the wilderness of a rural area, and are usually signaled by dense smoke that fills the area for miles around.

A distinction is normally made between three classes of wildfires: surface, ground, and crown fires. A surface fire, the most common type, burns along the floor of a forest, moving slowly and killing or damaging trees. A ground fire is usually started by lightning and burns on or below the forest floor. Crown fires spread rapidly by wind and move quickly by jumping along the tops of trees.

These fires are generally the result of dry conditions combined with lightning or carelessness and spread unconstrained through the environment. It may take decades after a wildfire for the scorched and barren land areas to return to pre-fire conditions. If the wildfire destroys the ground cover, then erosion becomes one of several potential problems.

### Hazard Profile

Georgia has several "danger zones," including all wooded, brush, and grassy areas in the state. However, the observed fire danger usually ranges from low to moderate. According to the available records, no Forest Fire Presidential Disaster Declarations have been made for Webster County.

According to the Wildfire Risk Layer in the GEMA maps by ITOS (depicted in Maps 3-5 below), most of Webster County scored either a 1, meaning that the wildfire danger is "very low", or a 0, meaning that there is "no fire danger because there are no houses, agriculture, water, or city." However, Preston and a couple of other patches scored 3 and 4 (High and Very High).

The Georgia Forestry Commission uses a Burning Index to determine the fire danger class. When the Burning index is at or above 97 percentiles, it is class 5 (i.e., Extreme Fire Danger Day); class 5 being the highest fire danger class. When the Burning Index is between 90 to 97 percentiles, it is a Class 4 (i.e. Very High Fire Danger Day), The fire danger class changes frequently, and it is very important for the Fire Department and EMA Director to stay informed about the current fire danger for better preparedness.

**Table 2.17: Wildfire Class Day Determination Points**

| Class | Description       | BI Percentiles. * |
|-------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 5     | Extreme           | 97 <sup>th</sup>  |
| 4     | Very High         | 90th to 97th      |
| 3+    | High to Very High | 81st to 90th      |
| 3     | High              | 61' to 80th       |
| 3-    | Low to Moderate   | 46th to 60th      |
| 2     | Moderate          | 21st to 45th      |
| 1     | Low               | 0th to 20th       |

Source: Georgia Forestry Commission. \*B1; Dividing Burning Index (BI) by 10 gives a reasonable estimate of flame length in feet at the head of a fire. Burning Index is fuel model dependent. At the Georgia Forestry Commission, this is the basis for Class Day.

According to the Georgia Forestry Commission Fire Summary Data, Webster County has had 42 fires caused by lightning between 1957 and 2026. According to the Hazard Frequency Table in Appendix A, the historic recurrence interval for a Wildfire event in Webster County is 1.26, which means that you can expect a wildfire event every 1.26 years, and a Historic frequency rate of 79.25%.

**Table 2.18: Annual Fires Caused by Lightning 1950-2026**

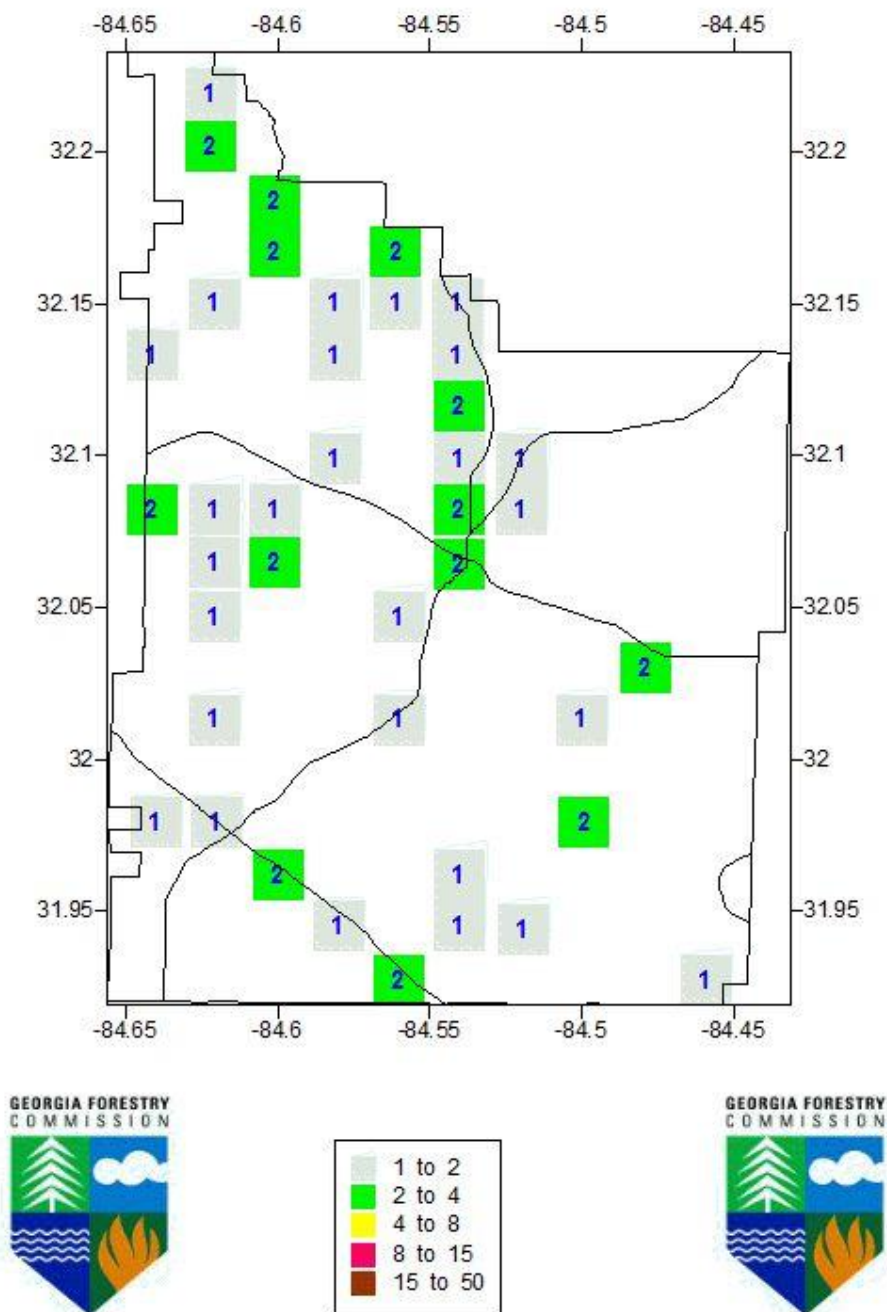
| Year          | Number of Fires | Acres Burned  |
|---------------|-----------------|---------------|
| 1967          | 1               | 0.60          |
| 1968          | 1               | 0.10          |
| 1969          | 3               | 10.00         |
| 1970          | 1               | 9.90          |
| 1971          | 3               | 9.80          |
| 1980          | 3               | 10.65         |
| 1983          | 2               | 249.25        |
| 1985          | 1               | 15.40         |
| 1986          | 5               | 97.57         |
| 1987          | 3               | 3.82          |
| 1988          | 1               | 0.65          |
| 1993          | 4               | 3.39          |
| 1996          | 1               | 0.76          |
| 1999          | 1               | 9.76          |
| 2000          | 1               | 3.90          |
| 2001          | 2               | 13.76         |
| 2006          | 1               | 0.23          |
| 2007          | 3               | 0.96          |
| 2008          | 1               | 0             |
| 2010          | 1               | 0             |
| 2011          | 3               | 20.36         |
| 2019          | 1               | 0.28          |
| 2020          | 1               | 2.47          |
| <b>Total:</b> | <b>42</b>       | <b>463.52</b> |

Source: Georgia Forestry Commission Fire Data Summary 2025

A Fire Occurrence data of Webster County for the fiscal years 2017, created by the Georgia Forestry Commission, shows that there are 50 occurrences.

**Map 2.16: Fire Occurrence Map for Webster County**

## Fire Occurrence Map for Webster County for Fiscal Year 2012-2016



The complete Community Wildfire Protection Plan for Webster County may be found in Appendix A. According to this plan, on a year-to-year basis, the leading cause of wildfires in Webster County is careless debris burning and machine related which came to almost 60 percent of all fires reported.

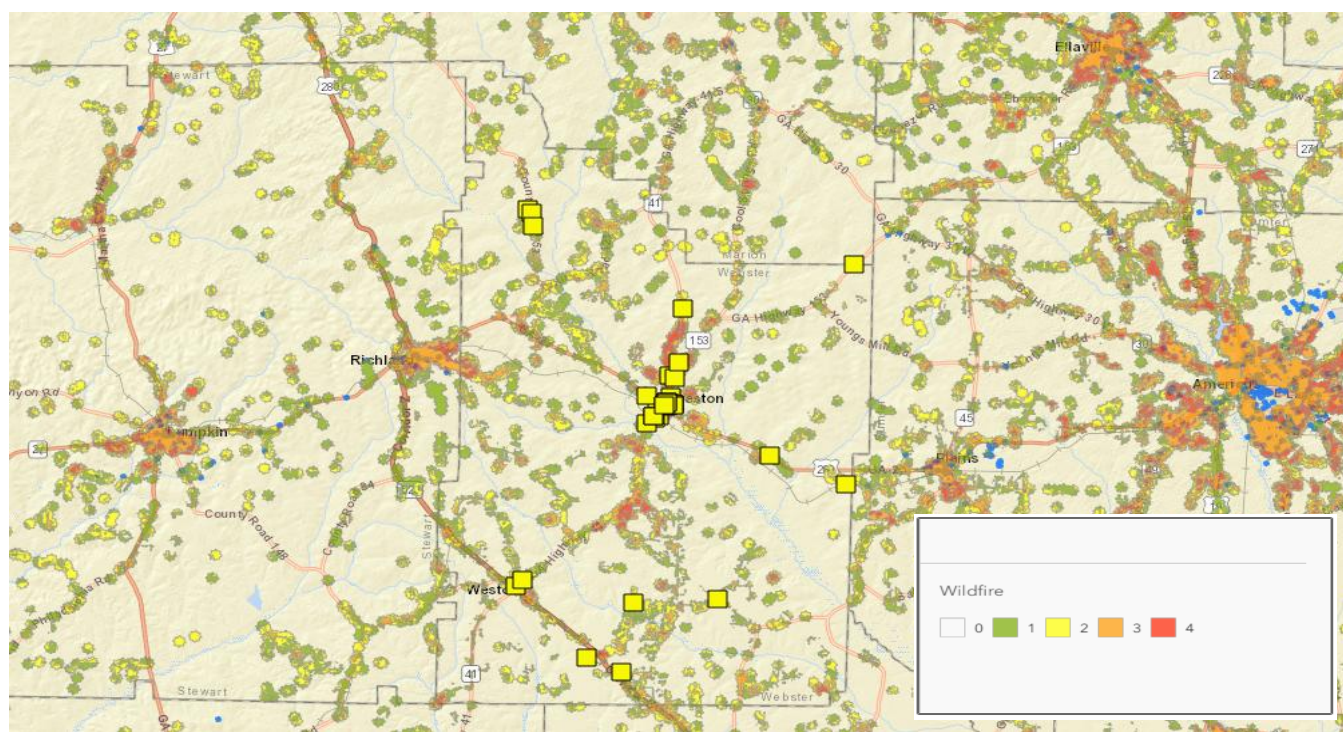
Communities-at-risk are locations where a group of two or more structures are proximity to a forested or wildland area place homes and residents at some degree of risk from wildfire. Other characteristics of the "community" such as the closeness of structures, building materials, the accumulation of combustible debris near the structures, access in and out, and the distance from the nearest fire station or a permanent water source (pond or dry hydrant) may contribute to the risk.

Improvements to the community infrastructure (roads, utilities, etc.) may be beyond the capabilities of the homeowners. However, if access by emergency vehicles can be enhanced by widening the entrance right-of-way(s), creating "hammerhead-T's" or other ways for fire trucks to turn around and operate safely and residences can be identified with reflective "911 addresses" wildfire protection can be greatly improved.

Modifications in and around individual residences may need to be budgeted by the residents over time (for example, making a roof more fire resistance may have to wait until it is time to replace the current roof covering), however, moving firewood away from the home, skirting raised decks and keeping roofs free of accumulated flammable debris are improvements most families can do in the short-run.

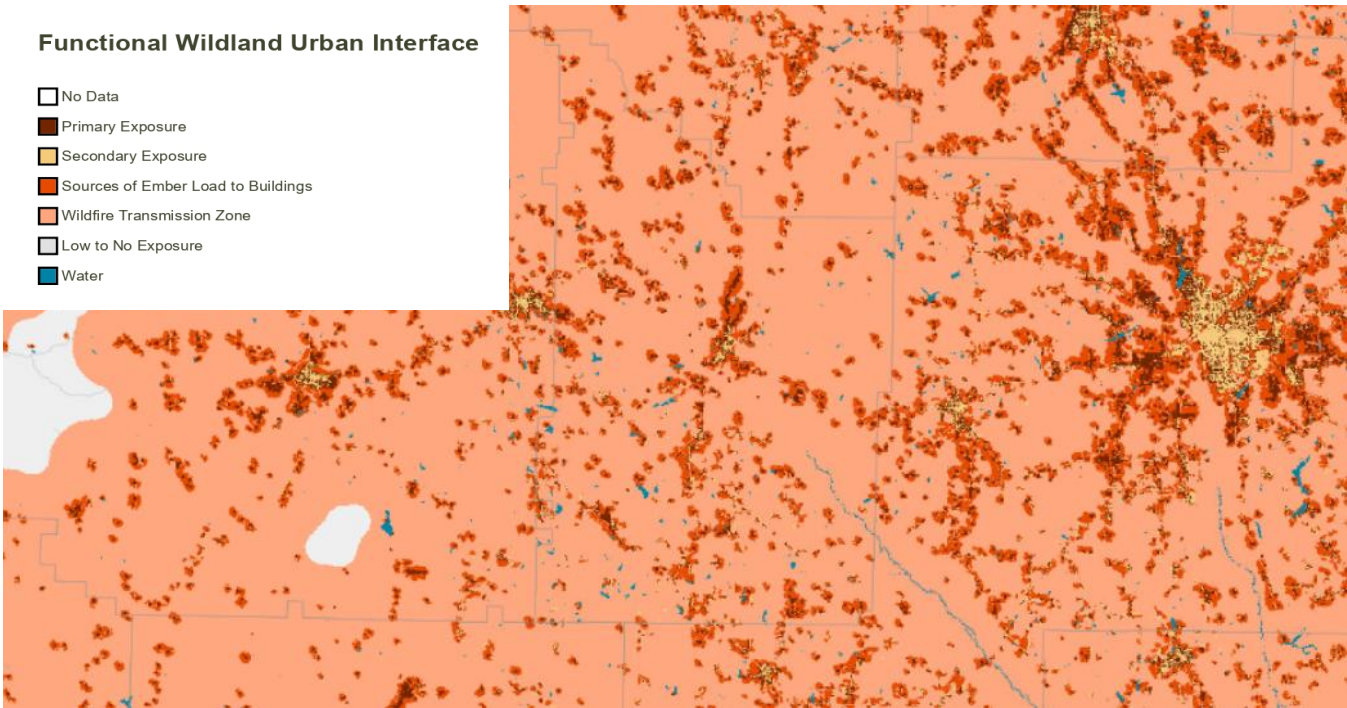
In most instances, communities-at-risk will benefit from the reduction/removal of flammable vegetation within 100 feet of homes and outbuildings through prescribed burning or by mechanical means. Fuel management with the home ignition zone (within 100 feet from the home) either by removing highly flammable vegetation or by replacing the vegetation with fire resistant plant species will significantly improve wildfire safety.

**Map 2.17: Wildfire Hazard Score, Webster County**



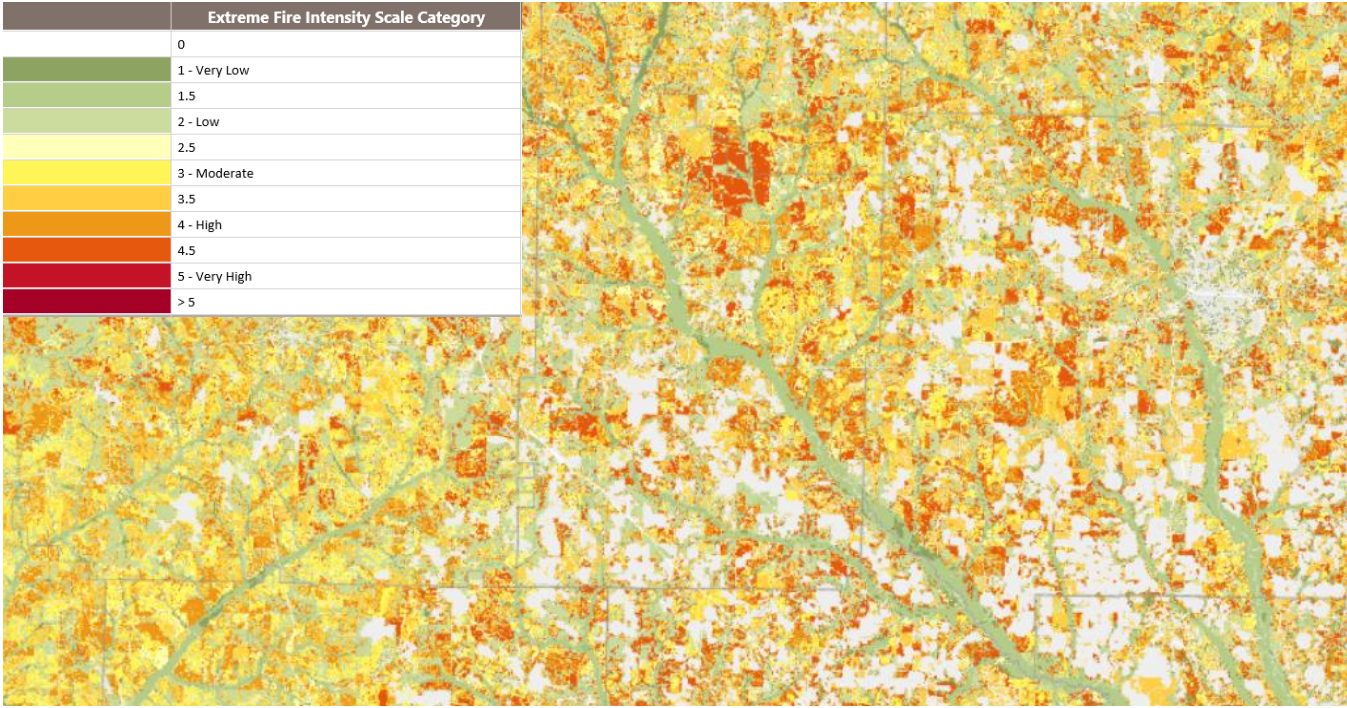
Source: GEMA ITOS 2025; See Appendix A for the hazard score key

**Map 2.18: Wildland Urban Interface Webster County**



Source: SouthWrap

**Map 2.19: Fire Intensity Scale Webster County**



Source: SouthWrap

## **Community Exposure**

According to the Wildfire Risk Layer in the GEMA maps by ITOS (depicted in Maps 3-5 below), most of Webster County scored either a 1, meaning that the wildfire danger is "very low", or a 0, meaning that there is "no fire danger because there are no houses, agriculture, water, or city." However, Preston and a couple of other patches scored a 3 and 4 (High and Very High). Therefore, the danger of wildfire is low for most critical facilities and non-critical structures. Critical Facilities and non-critical facilities are not impacted as much by wildfires as are timber and forest land. According to the 2025 Georgia County Guide, Webster County has approximately 70,416 acres of land in farms, which amounts to almost 52.6% of all land in the county. Thus, a wildfire out of control could damage Webster's natural resources considerably.

## **Estimates of Potential Losses**

The estimated cost of all 41 critical facility replacement (\$31M) and content value (\$6M) amounts to a total of \$38M (Appendix A). For a complete listing of replacement values of each critical facility, please refer to the GEMA worksheet #3b on Wind Hazard Scores in Appendix D.

## **Land Use and Development Trends**

As residential areas expand into relatively untouched wilderness areas, people living in these communities become threatened by forest fires. Protecting structures in these areas from fire poses special problems and can stretch firefighting resources to the limit.

## **Multi-Jurisdictional Wildfire Differences**

The Wildfire Risk Layer in the GEMA map by ITOS is based on the USDA Forest Services, RMRS Fire Sciences Laboratory "Wildland Fire Risk to Flammable Structures, V 1.0" map. Although this data is not intended for use at detail greater than state-wide analysis, it has been included as the best available data on wildfire risk. Most of Webster County scored either 0 or 1, meaning very low to no fire danger.

## **Hazard Risk and Vulnerability Summary**

Wildfires are generally the result of dry conditions combined with lightning or carelessness and spread unconstrained throughout the environment. Public awareness helps to mitigate such fires. This might include banning outdoor burning during the dry season.

Webster County has also implemented an E911 system to improve the county's ability to warn citizens of local emergencies. The E911 system was established in 2009. As of 2014, there have been no changes in codes, ordinances, development patterns, or mitigations projects that would affect the risk that the county faces from this hazard.

## Chapter Three: Local Technological Hazard, Risk & Vulnerability (HRV)

Table 3.1 s a brief description of each chapter and a summary of the changes made.

**Table 3.1: Updates to Section**

| Chapter Two Section                | Updates to Section                                                                                                                  |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Hazardous Materials Spills         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Updated language</li><li>• Noted extent of hazard.</li></ul>                                |
| Radiological Releases              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Previously titled 'Nuclear Power Plant Accident</li><li>• Noted extent of hazard.</li></ul> |
| Dam Failure                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Noted extent of hazard.</li><li>• Updated language</li><li>• Updated maps</li></ul>         |
| Infrastructure Failure             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• New section</li></ul>                                                                       |
| Emergent Infectious Diseases (NEW) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• New section</li></ul>                                                                       |

### HAZARDOUS MATERIALS (IN-TRANSIT AND FIXED)

#### Hazard Description

Hazardous materials, or hazmat, refers to any materials that may pose a real hazard to human health and/or the environment because of its quantity, concentration, and/or physical or chemical characteristics. Hazardous materials include explosives, flammables, combustibles, oxidizers, toxic materials, radioactive substances, and corrosives. Specific federal and State regulations exist regarding the transport and storage of hazardous materials.

Hazardous materials spill or release occur when hazardous material gets into the environment in an uncontrolled fashion. Response to a hazmat spill or release depends greatly on the type of material involved and the subsequent physical and chemical characteristics. Major sources of hazardous materials spills include transportation accidents on roadways and railways, pipeline breaches, and spills into rivers and creeks. Jurisdictions with facilities that produce, process, or store hazardous materials are at risk, as are facilities that treat or dispose of hazardous materials.

Roadway hazards are most likely to be caused by a motor vehicle accident involving one or more cars, trucks, vans, or transport vehicles. These incidents can have injuries as a result of the impact of the MV A Or a hazardous materials release into the local environment, including waterways. Railway incidents pose many of the same dangers as motor vehicle accidents. However, the threat of hazardous materials release is greatly increased when railway transportation incidents are considered.

Air accidents can include commercial airplanes, private airplanes, hot air balloons, helicopters, or other forms of air travel. Each of these incidents can cause a significant threat to human life as well as posing a hazardous material threat due to the cargo being transposed or the fuel being used. Navigable waterway incidents can create formidable incidents for response organizations. Because of the waterway, technical expertise is needed to carry Out rescue operations, especially in swift-moving waterways. Also, any incident in a waterway is likely to have environmental impacts.

# Hazard Profile

Hazardous Materials can be accidentally released in two situations: from fixed locations, where the materials are produced, processed, or stored, or in-transit, when the materials are transported.

To keep track of fixed spills, the Environmental Protection Division (EPD) of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources keeps a list of all facilities and their chemical inventory, plus a history of spill events. According to the 2020 EPD Hazardous Sites Inventory there are no known fixed locations in Webster County. As a result, potential hazardous material accidents in Webster County would be caused in-transit.

The most heavily traveled local highway is a four-lane, east-west, state route (GA Hwy 520) crossing the southwest corner of the county. This route has five junctions and three intersections with state and local routes; the largest traffic volume is at state route 41 in Weston. The highway runs parallel to a railroad along the full length of the local segment, sharing mutual right-of-way boundary along the majority of the route, and intersects with another rail line near the west county line. The following table presents the documented record of local transportation-related incidents involving hazardous materials.

Table 3.2: Transportation Accidents

|                          | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|--------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Crashes                  | 54   | 35   | 39   | 29   | 31   |
| Suspected Serious Injury | 4    | 2    | 3    | 0    | 1    |
| Fatalities               | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0    |

Source: Governor’s Office of Highway Safety

While the Governor’s Office of Highway Safety tracks traffic crash data throughout the state, every spill of hazardous materials has to be reported to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and to the National Response Center (NRC) by the responsible party. According to the Governor’s Office of Highway Safety, from 2020 to 2024 there were 188 vehicle crashes in Webster County.

However, over that same time period there was only 1 transportation accident that resulted in a hazardous materials spill in transit. For Webster County, the DNR and NRC have information about the following five events since 1990.

Table 3.3: Reported Hazardous Material Incidents in Webster County 1995-2025

| Date     | Death/Injury | Material        | Location             |
|----------|--------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 4/22/95  | 0            | Mathanearsonate | GA 520 (mile post 6) |
| 4/05/96  | 0            | Diesel          | N/A                  |
| 9/24/96  | 0            | Diesel          | Preston, Ga. 41      |
| 1/23/03  | 0            | Gasoline        | GA 520 (mile post 5) |
| 12/14/15 | 0            | Resin Solution  | GA 520 (mile post 4) |

Source: DNR and NRC 2020

According to the Hazard Frequency Table in Appendix A, the historic recurrence interval is 1incident every 6.20 years for a transient source spill with a 16.13% chance that a release of hazardous materials will occur in Webster County in a given year from an in-transit source. The nature of hazardous material spills is such that no extent of this hazard can be determined.

## **Community Exposure**

The incidents reported above occurred on the community's most heavily traveled route. However, a similar traffic volume passes through Preston, the seat of county government, and within a mile of the critical facilities located there. There is no history of critical facility damage resulting from an in-transit hazardous materials spill, and they are generally considered not to be at risk.

## **Estimate of Potential Losses**

Potential Losses were estimated by use of the OHS/GEMA web-based planning tool. Data input for the Assets Worksheet included the replacement value and structure content value of each critical facility identified. Because all areas of the community are, theoretically, exposed to the threat posed by this hazard, all critical facilities are at risk, though presumably not all as the result of a single in-transit hazardous materials spill. The combined total estimated structure replacement value (\$31M) and total estimated contents value (\$6M) are \$31.7M. This information can be reviewed in detail in Appendix D. Aggregate value of the community's "non-critical" facilities has been estimated for use here; documentation is presented in Appendix A. There is no history of critical facility or "non-critical" facility damage resulting from an in-transit hazardous materials spill, and they are generally considered not to be at risk.

## **Land Use and Development**

Other than the presence of two small trucking companies, which bring more heavy truck traffic through Webster County than would otherwise occur, current land uses are not significantly impacting the risk of in-transit hazardous materials spill. There are not any current development trends which would increase the community's exposure to this hazard.

## **Multi-Jurisdictional Differences**

Webster County is a Unified Government. The graphics included in this document display the full distribution of the county's critical facilities.

## **Hazard Risk Vulnerability Assessment**

The community's current level of exposure to transportation accidents is expected to increase as a result of location and increased traffic volumes along major highways.

Source: Georgia Hazard Mitigation Strategy 2024



## **RADIOLOGICAL RELEASE**

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### **Hazard Description**

Nuclear fission generates heat. When fission is used in a contained environment, water can be converted to steam through this heat, and this steam can power generators and produce electricity. This is the basic design of nuclear power plants. Most states have nuclear power plants, and almost 3 million Americans live in close proximity – a 10-mile radius – from such a plant. Everything is done to make this energy source as safe as possible, and accidents are unlikely, but still possible. Should radioactive material ever be released into the surrounding environment from a plant, a plume can affect the area around the plant. The danger to the residents is the exposure to radiation.

Webster County is just outside of the 50-mile Ingestion Pathway Zone (IPZ) of Joseph M. Farley Nuclear Power Plant in southeastern Alabama. Although the risk frequency is low, potential consequences are high.

Potential impacts within the 50-mile IPZ are primarily focused on the impact on soil and water as it relates to crops, livestock, and poultry. The primary focus is to identify potential contamination and prevent the introduction of contaminated foodstuffs into the food chain.

### **Hazard Profile**

The Joseph M. Farley Nuclear Plant is located in Columbia, east of Dothan, in southeast Alabama on the Chattahoochee River, which is about 75 miles from Webster County. For its location, please see Map in Appendix A. This electric utility generating station is owned by Alabama Power and operated by Southern Nuclear Operating Company. It is one of three nuclear facilities in the Southern electric system. Construction of the plant began in 1970, and operations started in 1977. The containment building, which houses the reactor, the reactor coolant system, and other nuclear-related components, is constructed of reinforced concrete and carbon steel, to safeguard the environment from radiological contamination.

Existing emergency response plans for the event of a nuclear power plant accident normally define two “emergency planning zones” around the plant.

- Plume Emergency Planning Zone; 10-mile radius; people could be harmed by direct radiation exposure.
- Ingestion Planning Zone; 50-mile radius; radioactive materials could contaminate water supplies, food crops, and livestock.

While not in either the Plume Emergency Planning Zone or the Ingestion Planning Zone, Webster County is 75 miles from Plant Farley and could be affected by any wind event from the southwest that occurs at the time of an accident. According to the GEMA Nuclear Planning Specialist Ray Roman, there have not been any significant previous accidents at the nuclear power plant in Farley since the start of the operations in 1977. Therefore, in the Hazard Frequency Table in Appendix A, the historic recurrence interval for radiological releases is not established, and the historic frequency states that there is no perceptible chance that an accident in the Alabama nuclear power plant will have an effect on Webster County in a given year. No extent for this hazard can be determined due to lack of records or studies in this area.

### **Community Exposure**

The major effect of radiation from a nuclear power plant accident is radiation exposure to the body and inhalation and ingestion of radioactive materials. The potential danger connected with an accident at a nuclear power plant

is the exposure of the environment to radiation through the release of radioactive material from the plant. Some weather conditions drive the radioactive material to the ground quicker than others. A quicker deposition is not desirable; it would increase the deposition of radionuclides.

While not in either the Plume Emergency Planning Zone or the Ingestion Planning Zone, Webster County is 70 miles from Plant Farley and could be affected by any wind event from the southwest that occurs at the time of an accident. It is unlikely that residents would have to be evacuated.

In the GEMA Critical Facility Inventory Map by ITOS, 41 critical facilities are mapped for Webster County. It is not expected that any of the buildings would be damaged through the release of radioactive materials from a nuclear power plant accident. However, some water system components could be vulnerable, such as the water towers, wells, and pump station.

### **Estimate of Potential Losses**

Potential Losses were estimated by use of the OHS/GEMA web-based planning tool. Data input for the Assets Worksheet included the replacement value and structure content value of each critical facility identified. Because all areas of the community are, theoretically, exposed to the threat posed by this hazard, all critical facilities are at risk.

The combined total estimated structure replacement value (\$31M) and total estimated contents value (\$6M) are \$31.7M. This information can be reviewed in detail in Appendix A, Aggregate value of the community's "non-critical" facilities has been estimated for use here; documentation is presented in Appendix A. There is no history of critical facility or "non-critical" facility damage resulting from an in-transit hazardous materials spill, and they are generally considered not to be at risk. Population and other demographic data are presented in Appendix B.

### **Land Use and Development Trends**

While not in either the Plume Emergency Planning Zone or the Ingestion Planning Zone, Webster County is 70 miles from Plant Farley and could be affected by any wind event from the southwest that occurs at the time of an accident. This lessens the probable impact on Webster County. Additionally, current land uses do not significantly impact the risk of a nuclear accident. There are not any current development trends which would increase the community's exposure to this hazard.

### **Multi-Jurisdictional Differences**

Webster County is a Unified Government. The graphics included in this document display the full distribution of the county's critical facilities.

### **Hazard Risk and Vulnerability Summary**

While not in either the Plume Emergency Planning Zone or the Ingestion Planning Zone, Webster County is 70 miles from Plant Farley and could be affected by any wind event from the southwest that occurs at the time of an accident. This lessens the probable impact on Webster County. As of 2026, there have been no changes in codes, ordinances, or development patterns that would affect the risk that the county faces from this hazard.

# DAM FAILURE

## Hazard Description

Dam failure is typically the result of a physical weakness in the structure of the dam, or inundation of the facility by flood waters which wash away earthen material flanking the infrastructure housing flood gates that regulate the upstream lake or pool area. The most common failure results from inundation by flood waters. Flooding which precipitates a breach can cause damage and destruction to properties along the upstream lakefront, and breach of the dam can destroy downstream development and create economic hardship.

Georgia law defines a dam as any artificial barrier, which impounds or diverts water, is twenty-five feet or more in height from the natural bed of a stream or has an impounding capacity at maximum water storage evaluation of 100 acre-feet or more. Dams are generally constructed to provide a ready supply of water for drinking, irrigation, recreation, and other purposes. Dams can be constructed from earth, rock, masonry, concrete, or any combination of these materials. Dam failure is a term used to describe a significant breach of a dam and the subsequent loss of contained water. Dam failure can cause significant damage downstream to structures, roads, utilities, and crops. Dam failure can also put human and animal lives at risk. National statistics indicate that one-third of all dam failures in the United States are caused by overtopping due to inadequate spillway design, debris blocking spillways, or settlement of the dam crest. Another third of all US dam failures the result of foundation defects, including settlement and slope instability.

## Hazard Profile

There is a total of thirty (30) dams located throughout Webster County, most of which are small dams, on private property. All of these dams are listed as Category II. This classification suggests that a malfunction is not expected to cause loss of life.

The community's largest flood event resulted from Tropical Storm Alberto in 1994 which, between July 3 and July 7, doused semi-saturated soils with approximately 20" of rain, almost half the community's annual average rainfall. Three farm pond dams were destroyed (Leverette, Kennedy, and Payne) and another (Wilson) damaged because of that single event.

A Webster County dam, Lake Dorris Dam, has required more frequent inspections in recent years, and the county fears that threat of a potential dam failure is increased. This dam, if it were to fail, would intersect with a highway US 280. This could impede emergency response operations, delay evacuation efforts, and restrict access to residential areas.

**Table 3.4: Georgia Safe Dams in Webster County 2026**

| Name                          | Classification | Latitude DD | Longitude DD | Dam Height | Max Storage |
|-------------------------------|----------------|-------------|--------------|------------|-------------|
| Andy Payne North Pond         | II             | 31.936389   | -84.603889   | 17.50      | 152.00      |
| Andy Payne Pond Dam           | II             | 31.938056   | -84.595556   | 18.20      | 266.00      |
| Andy Payne Southeast Pond Dam | II             | 31.933333   | -84.600000   | 16.00      | 111.00      |
| Bankston Lake Dam             | II             | 32.116389   | -84.555417   | 12.50      | 229.00      |
| Bankston Lake Dam             | II             | 32.116389   | -84.555417   | 12.50      | 229.00      |
| Bill Forrest Pond Dam         | II             | 32.124528   | -84.462056   | 22.50      | 136.50      |

|                          |    |           |            |       |        |
|--------------------------|----|-----------|------------|-------|--------|
| Bill Forrest Southeast   | II | 32.113806 | -84.431889 | 29.00 | 274.00 |
| Black Lake Dam           | II | 31.973333 | -84.536389 | 25.70 | 76.00  |
| County Road 80 Lake      | II | 32.060639 | -84.614472 | 21.90 | 527.00 |
| Dennis Wills Pond Dam    | II | 31.972694 | -84.562111 | 17.50 | 148.00 |
| G.B. Alston Lake Dam     | II | 31.986556 | -84.586833 | 15.00 | 751.00 |
| Gill Pond Dam            | II | 32.129778 | -84.625917 | 12.00 | 165.50 |
| Goodwin's Pond Dam       | II | 31.978056 | -84.641667 | 16.60 | 407.30 |
| Holoka Lake Dam          | II | 31.926667 | -84.512222 | 16.90 | 145.50 |
| Homer C. Jenkins Lake    | II | 31.949167 | -84.495750 | 27.60 | 267.60 |
| Homer Jenkins Pond Dam   | II | 32.025667 | -84.561556 | 27.00 | 387.50 |
| J.E. Jones Lake Dam      | II | 31.932639 | -84.648444 | 25.00 | 34.00  |
| Kennedy Lake Dam         | II | 31.945278 | -84.546944 | 18.50 | 127.30 |
| Kennedy Pond Dam         | II | 32.056333 | -84.563083 | 18.30 | 618.10 |
| Lake Doris Dam           | II | 32.037528 | -84.569611 | 23.60 | 207.80 |
| Leverette Pond Dam       | II | 31.935000 | -84.525556 | 25.90 | 192.50 |
| Merritt Large Lake Dam   | II | 32.032278 | -84.642667 | 17.40 | 560.00 |
| Merritt South Lake Dam   | II | 32.024167 | -84.645694 | 19.00 | 351.00 |
| Payne Pond Dam           | II | 31.933889 | -84.609722 | 14.70 | 201.00 |
| Stapleton Lake Dam       | II | 31.990278 | -84.582222 | 21.40 | 163.30 |
| Taylor Farms Lake Dam    | II | 31.947778 | -84.604167 | 17.70 | 203.00 |
| Tommy Ray Payne Pond Dam | II | 31.938444 | -84.613722 | 25.30 | 105.00 |
| Upper Forrest Lake Dam   | II | 32.116417 | -84.436222 | 18.50 | 129.70 |
| Upper Holoka Lake Dam    | II | 31.922333 | -84.513028 | 16.30 | 115.30 |
| Wilson Lake Dam          | II | 32.087500 | -84.553056 | 23.20 | 126.60 |

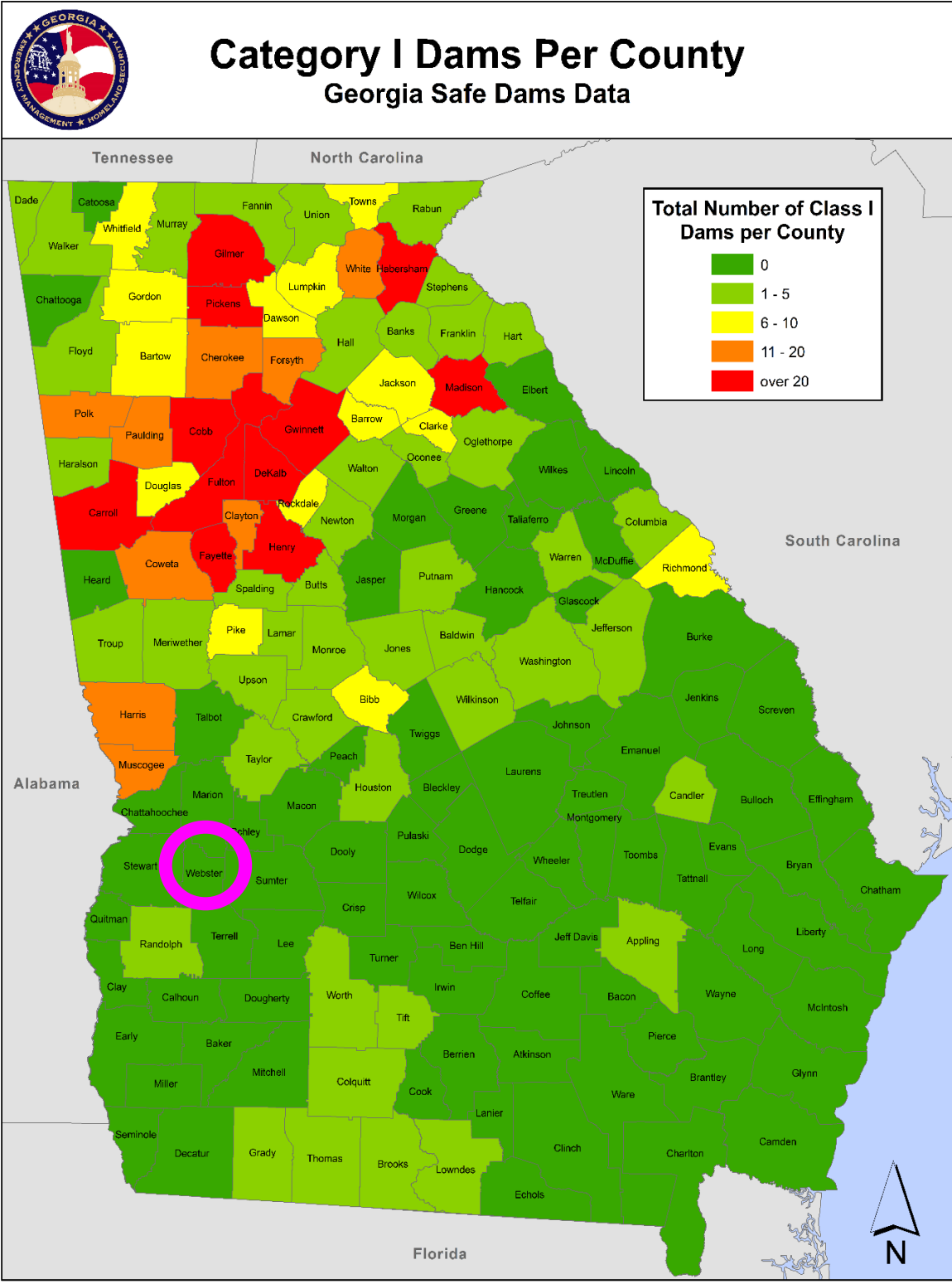
Source: Georgia Safe Dams 2025

**Table 3.5: Webster County Dam Failure**

| Location | Date | Damage            |
|----------|------|-------------------|
| County   | 1994 | Roads and Bridges |
| County   | 1998 | Roads and Bridges |

Since no historic data is available on dam failures in Webster County since the previous Hazard Mitigation plan, the historic recurrence interval is not established, and the historic frequency states that there is not a perceptible chance that a dam failure will cause flooding in Webster County any given year. While there have been no dam failures in recent years, Lake Doris dam has suffered significant damage and is considered to be at risk by Webster County.

Map 3.2: Category I Dams Per County



Source: 2024 Georgia Hazard Mitigation Plan

## **Community Exposure**

There are numerous earthen dams in the community, and the full limit of exposure cannot be determined because of the absence of mapping which could reveal the level of development in the dam “shadow.” Such mapping would be useful in revealing the degree of community exposure.

## **Estimate of Potential Losses**

In absence of an identifiable hazard area boundary, i.e., dam “shadow,” estimation of the potential loss would be little more than a guess. None of the 41 critical facilities are believed to be located in what is assumed to be a dam “shadow.” Nevertheless, the combined total estimated critical facilities structure replacement value (\$31M) and total estimated contents value (\$6M) communitywide is \$31.7M (Appendix A). Value of the community’s “non-critical” facilities has not been determined for current purposes. There is not believed to be any significant private development downstream of local farm pond dams. To date, breaches of these structures have resulted in only road and bridge damage. Population and other demographic data are presented in Appendix E.

## **Land Use and Development Trends**

No current land use or development trend is influencing the community’s exposure to this threat. Mapping of dam “shadows” can reveal the extent of existing development downstream and, hence, the extent to which land use affects community exposure to this threat. Mapping of dam “shadows” is important for managing the future level of development in these areas.

## **Multi-Jurisdictional Differences**

Webster County is a Unified Government. The graphics included in this document display the full distribution of the county’s critical facilities.

## **Hazard, Risk and Vulnerability Summary**

In absence of necessary mapping, dam failure is perceived to be one of the less serious threats to the community. These structures are in the rural, undeveloped areas of the community, distant from critical facilities. However, as development occurs, dam “shadows” need to be identified so development can be diverted from potential threats. This plan has occurred since the previous Webster County Hazard Mitigation Plan was updated. As of 2026, there have been no changes in codes, ordinances, or development patterns that would affect the risk that the county faces from this hazard. Mitigation projects completed since 2015 include construction of a new fire station, purchase of emergency generators, water system capacity increases, and an EOC facility in the new Board of Commissioners’ office.

# INFRASTRUCTURE FAILURE

## Hazard Description

Infrastructure failure is a broad term that encompasses the hazards that are created or exacerbated when incidents, both human-caused and natural, cause the failure of an infrastructure element. Infrastructure, such as utilities, communication, water and sewer, transportation, and dams are particularly vulnerable to both natural and manmade hazards. While a communications or utility failure would most likely be a secondary hazard of one of the other hazards identified in this plan, many infrastructure failures could be stand-alone incidents. A lack of communication with outside sources or a long-duration lack of utility service could lead to public panic, poor emergency response capabilities, and other domino hazards. These events pose a significant threat to many jurisdictions.

In case of any failure of a utility or communication infrastructure, general difficulties would be exacerbated both for emergency responders and for the public. The reliance on wireless communications, particularly for the public safety sector, increases the vulnerability of Webster County’s emergency response agencies to a utility failure. Primary causes of infrastructure failure:

- **Chronic Underinvestment & Delayed Maintenance:** agencies frequently struggle with massive funding shortages, leading to deferred maintenance and a reactionary "fix on failure" approach. Routine upkeep is often sidelined for highly visible, new construction projects, accelerating the decay of existing assets.
- **Natural Hazards:** Much of the existing infrastructure was engineered for historical weather patterns, making it highly vulnerable to modern climate realities like unprecedented flooding, sea-level rise, and extreme temperatures.
- **Aging Materials & Overuse:** Over time, building materials degrade due to environmental exposure, structural fatigue, and corrosion.

## Hazard Profile

Road and transportation failure is identified as the primary hazard under infrastructure failure within Webster County. A major highway, US 280, runs through Webster County, and the county also has many rural, unpaved roads. The Table 3.6 below shows the total road mileage of all roads, unpaved roads, state routes, and county roads.

**Table 3.6: Webster County Road Data**

| Total Road Mileage | Total Unpaved Road Mileage Percentage | State Route Mileage | County Road Mileage |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 522                | 33%                                   | 52                  | 210                 |

Source: 2025 Georgia County Guide

According to the table, 33% of the county’s roads are rural and unpaved. Unpaved roads during these events are prone to washouts, rutting, slope instability, and complete loss of access, all of which can significantly impede emergency response operations, delay evacuation efforts, and restrict access to residential areas, utility infrastructure, and critical facilities (Golden Triangle RC & D). Many of the unpaved roads in Webster County have begun to deteriorate due to erosion, flash flooding, hurricanes/tropical storms, tornadoes, and severe thunderstorms with straight-line wind, and will be further exacerbated in the event of a dam failure.

In addition to effects on residents and infrastructure, unpaved roads can also produce significant environmental impacts during hazard events. Limited drainage capacity combined with unstable road surfaces can accelerate erosion and increase sediment transport. This can degrade adjacent streams, wetlands, and downstream water resources through elevated sedimentation and associated water quality impacts.

Water and Sewer infrastructure is also an identified hazard for the county. In Webster County, groundwater is utilized for municipal, commercial, industrial, and agricultural use. Both the Preston and Weston communities have municipal water supply and distribution systems.

Webster County is served by individual septic systems not a sanitary sewer system. Although septic systems can cause groundwater pollution problems, they are not an issue in Webster due to the lack of population density where the systems are utilized. The main issue is aging water and sewer infrastructure. Table 3.7 and Table 3.8 below show the water and sewer capacity of Webster County.

**Table 3.7: Water Usage and Storage Information for Webster County**

| Water Plant Capacity (gal/day) | Consumption (gal/day) | Elevated Storage Capacity | Ground Storage Capacity | Water Source | Cumulative Pumping Capacity | Population Served | Connection |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|------------|
| 500,000                        | 123,600               | 250,000                   | N/A                     | Ground       | 740 gpm                     | 1,236             | *          |

Source: 2023 Regional Plan

**Table 3.8: Sewage Treat System Capabilities**

| Sewage Plant Capacity (gal/day) | Load (gal/day) |
|---------------------------------|----------------|
| N/A                             | N/A            |

Source: 2023 Regional Plan

### Community Exposure

Threats to critical infrastructures can be posed by anyone with the capability, technology, opportunity, and intent to do harm. All assets and critical facilities within Webster County could potentially be impacted by an infrastructure failure or could be the source for the infrastructure failure.

### Estimate of Potential Losses

Estimated potential losses cannot be anticipated with this event due to the vast number of differing scenarios regarding infrastructure failures. In the case of dam failure, loss estimations are not applicable since it is not known which dam will fail and how significant of failure will occur.

### Land Use and Development Trends

Webster County currently has no land use trends specifically related to utility, transportation, and communication infrastructure failures. However, Webster County participates in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and follows the program’s guidelines to ensure future development is carried out in the best interests of the public, which does ensure future infrastructure expansion is planned with a consideration for the risks within local floodplains.

The County (CID No. 130521) first entered the NFIP on May 6, 1996. According to the NFIP guidelines, the County has executed a Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance. This ordinance attempts to minimize the loss of human life and health as well as minimize public and private property losses due to flooding. The ordinance requires any potential flood damage be evaluated at the time of initial construction and that certain uses be restricted or prohibited based on this evaluation. The ordinance also requires that potential homebuyers be notified that a property is located in a flood area.

### **Multi-Jurisdictional Differences**

Webster County is a Unified Government. The graphics included in this document display the full distribution of the county's critical facilities.

### **Hazard Risk and Vulnerability Summary**

The Webster County Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee has determined that infrastructure failures pose a high risk to all Webster jurisdictions due to the unpredictable nature of the incident and have developed mitigation strategies and actions.

## EMERGENT INFECTIOUS DISEASES

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### Hazard Description

A public health emergency is considered here to be an occurrence or imminent threat of an illness or health condition, caused by bioterrorism, epidemic or pandemic disease, or novel and highly fatal infections agent or biological toxin, which poses a substantial risk of a significant number of human fatalities or incidents of permanent or long-term disability. While other hazards enumerated in this plan can trigger public health emergencies, it is listed as a separate and distinct hazard because of individual and diverse causes of the emergency.

Infectious diseases can occur as primary events or they may occur as a cascading result of another disaster, such as a tornado, flood, or winter weather. Infectious diseases can vary greatly in severity and magnitude. According to the World Health Organization, infectious diseases account for three of the ten leading causes of death worldwide – HIV/AIDS, lower respiratory infections, and diarrheal disease. These three events, combined with tuberculosis and malaria, account for 20% of deaths globally.

Livestock disease is a pathological condition resulting from infection and usually characterized by identifiable symptoms. However, determining risk and exposure can be difficult in some outbreaks because symptoms can take months or years to appear. Exotic Newcastle Disease is so virulent that many birds die without showing any clinical signs of the infection. Some diseases can lead to death of the host and, if not controlled, large-scale contagious diseases can lead to the death of infinite numbers of the herd or flock. If allowed to spread to sufficient scale animal diseases can cause health and economic disasters. Depending on the disease, cross-species transmissions to humans can occur via contact or consumption of animal products. Even the disposal of large numbers of carcasses can create community health risks.

### Hazard Profile

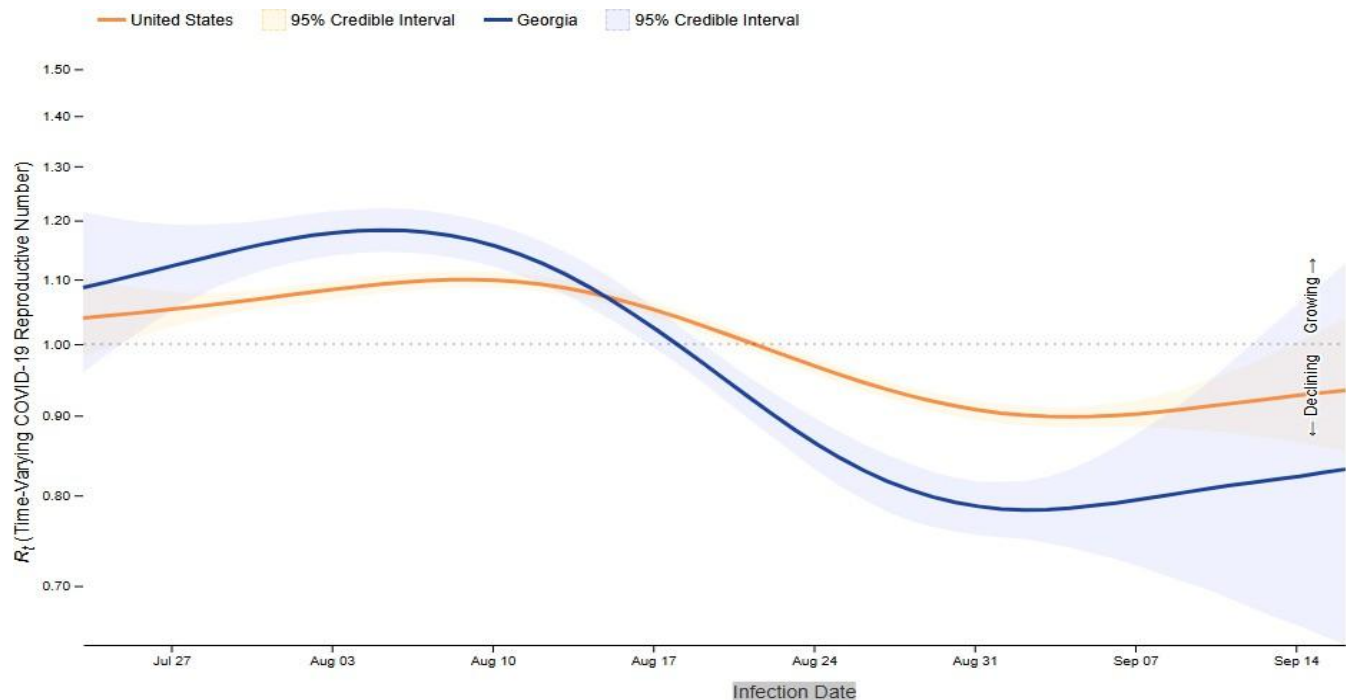
Emergent Infectious diseases are of significant concern to the Webster County Hazard Planning Committee particularly those that would have an impact on the human population or animal population of Webster County. Webster County would likely see significant economic impacts from an outbreak involving animal populations, such as Avian Flu, due to the large economic base agriculture provides. The lack of current vaccines and preparatory activities for these diseases has created a situation where the potential impact to Webster County of a pandemic or epidemic could be catastrophic.

Over the last 25 years, emergent infectious disease outbreaks have occurred in other parts of the country. These include:

- 1993 Cryptosporidium Outbreak (Milwaukee, Wisconsin — 403,000 people ill and 100 deaths)
- 2010 Whooping Cough Outbreak (California — 9,500 people ill and 10 infant deaths)
- 2014 Measles (Nationwide — 334 cases from January to May 2014 — most in 20 years)
- 2015 H5N2 Avian Flu Outbreak (Midwest — over 25 million chickens and turkeys destroyed as a precautionary measure at 83 locations).
- 2019-2020 COVID-19 (Novel Coronavirus Outbreak (Worldwide))

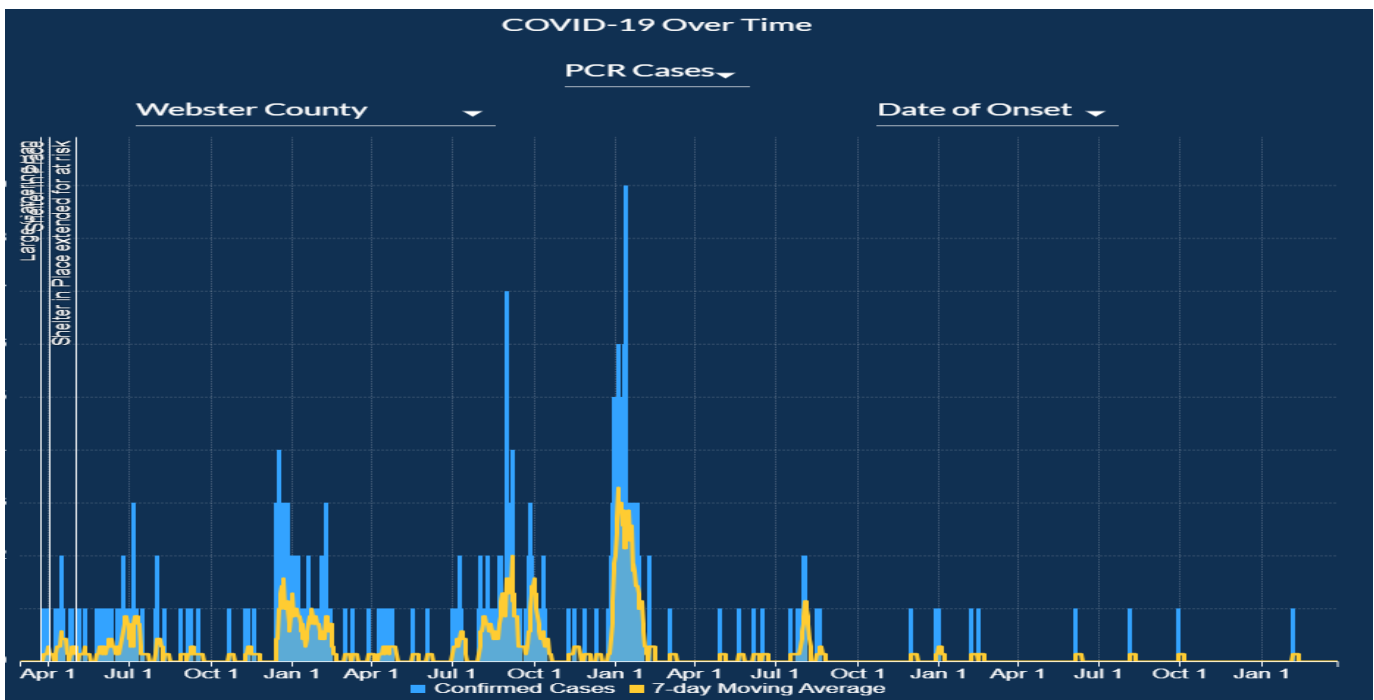
Additionally, most notably in 2020, Georgia experienced the COVID-19 pandemic. As of April 2026, there were 282 confirmed cases and over 10 deaths.

**Graphic 3.1: COVID-19 Injection, September 2025**



Source: Georgia Department of Public Health COVID-19 Dashboard

**Graphic 3.2: Webster County Covid-19 Over Time**



Source: Georgia DPH COVID-19 Status

The Georgia Department of Agriculture (GDA) and the United States Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA-APHIS) confirmed a positive case of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) in a

non-commercial, backyard (non-poultry) flock located in Henry County, Georgia on September 5, 2025. The flock consists of approximately 45 birds of mixed species. This is the first confirmed case of HPAI in Georgia since January 2025, the second detection in a backyard flock this year, and the fourth overall detection in the state in 2025. Avian influenza does not pose a risk to the food supply, and no affected animals have entered the food chain. The risk of human infection remains very low.

**Table 3.9: Georgia Cases of Avian Influenza in Poultry Flocks, 2025**

| County     | NVSL Confirmation Date | Type of Flock        |
|------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| Stewartton | January 9, 2025        | Backyard non-poultry |
| Elbert     | January 17, 2025       | Commercial poultry   |
| Elbert     | January 22, 2025       | Commercial poultry   |
| Henry      | September 3, 2025      | Backyard non-poultry |

Source: Georgia Department of Agriculture, <https://agr.georgia.gov/avian-influenza>

### Community Exposure

Due to the unpredictable nature of emergent infectious diseases, all public and private structures are threatened by hazards. This includes all critical facilities. Although the risk for infectious diseases is low, Webster County’s agricultural base makes the county more susceptible to livestock diseases/

### Estimate of Potential Losses

A public health emergency is not expected to have any significant impact on the built environment but could be devastating to the population. While it may be conceivable a building could be so badly contaminated it may be as expensive to decontaminate as to replace, such instances would be extreme. Nevertheless, potential losses have been estimated by use of the GEMA web-based planning tool. Data input for the Assets Worksheet included the replacement value and structure content value of each critical facility identified. Because all areas of the community are exposed to the threat posed by this hazard, critical facilities distributed throughout the county are at risk. Thus, any percentage of the total replacement and structure content values is subject to loss. All 41 critical facilities identified in the GEMA Critical Facility Inventory Map by ITOS have a total (content and structure) replacement value of \$31.7M.

### Land Use and Development Trends

Local land use and development patterns are not expected to cause or contribute to a public health emergency. But developed places and areas are the sites of greatest human interaction and are expected to be the place of origin of a public health emergency.

### Multi-Jurisdictional Differences

Webster County is vulnerable to emergent infectious diseases. However, livestock and other farm animals are considered to be the greatest at risk, along with areas that have a large, concentrated human population, such as schools.

### Hazard Risk and Vulnerability Summary

An emergent infectious disease would have devastating effects on Webster County. These impacts would be immediate and long-lasting and could be potentially economically crippling. Although the community has been spared from the experience of a public health emergency since the COVID-19 pandemic, the threat is considered real and likely to increase.

## Chapter Four: Natural Hazards Mitigation Strategy

Chapter four lists broad community goals, and it determines specific objectives and action plans for each of the natural hazard identified in Chapters Two. As part of the update process, the Planning Committee performed a comprehensive review of the goals and objectives in the 2026 Plan Update. Existing policies, regulations, ordinances, and land uses were identified for each hazard. Overall, the priorities of the community did not change drastically from the previous planning cycle. The most significant changes were for the Goals. Where the previous plan included goals for each hazard, the current plan list broad community goals. Table 4.1 is a brief description of each chapter and a summary of the changes made.

**Table 4.1: Updates to Section**

| Chapter Three Section                              | Updates to Section                                             |
|----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Goals and Objectives                               | Consolidated tasks and objectives                              |
| Thunderstorm (lightening, thunderstorm wind, hail) | Formatting change-use of tables<br>Consolidated with Hailstorm |
| Hurricane and Tropical Storm                       | Formatting change-use of tables                                |
| Tornado                                            | Formatting change-use of tables                                |
| Inland Flooding                                    | Formatting change-use of tables                                |
| Drought                                            | Formatting change-use of tables                                |
| Extreme Temperatures                               | New Hazard<br>Consolidated with Severe Winter Weather          |
| Wildfires                                          | New Hazard                                                     |

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Most of the mitigation efforts listed below will be implemented by the county's EMA department. Other departments represented in the process will be the county Fire, EMS, Sheriff, Senior Centers, Board of Education, DFCS, and the local Red Cross. On the municipal level, most of the mitigation efforts will be implemented by the local government and its local police and public works department. The funding for necessary projects will be included in the public safety or public works portion of the yearly budget. Five general mitigation goals have been established. Reaching these goals will have positive impacts on mitigation for all hazards.

### Goals:

| Overall Goals |                                                                                                                   |
|---------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Goal 1</b> | Protect the public health and safety                                                                              |
| <b>Goal 2</b> | Reduce, and to the extent possible eliminate, community exposure to natural (and man-made) hazard events          |
| <b>Goal 3</b> | Reduce loss and damage to private property and public infrastructure resulting from natural (or man-made) hazards |
| <b>Goal 4</b> | Maintain continuity of public and private sector operations during and after hazard events                        |
| <b>Goal 5</b> | Respond promptly, appropriately, and efficiently in the event of natural (or man-made) hazards                    |

## GENERAL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

| Objective                                                                                                                                                                                  | Action Items                                                                                                                                                | Organizations          |                        | Jurisdiction | Timeline      | Cost       | Funding Source    | Status  |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|--------------|---------------|------------|-------------------|---------|
|                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                             | Responsible            | Coordinating           |              |               |            |                   |         |
| Increase coordination between local public and private sectors in pre-disaster planning.                                                                                                   | Continue regular meetings among emergency response personnel concerning services, regulations, capabilities, personnel, equipment, needs, limitations, etc. | EMA                    | Emergency Responders   | Webster      | Twice a month | Staff time | Operating Budgets | Ongoing |
|                                                                                                                                                                                            | Meet with the Family Connections Collaborative and incorporate private sector participation at meetings of emergency response personnel                     | EMA                    | Business Community     | Webster      | Monthly       | Staff time | Operating Budgets | Ongoing |
|                                                                                                                                                                                            | Develop a database of local business emergency contact information                                                                                          | EMA                    | Business Community     | Webster      | Annually      | Staff time | Operating Budgets | Ongoing |
| Increase resident awareness of the community's greatest disaster threats to disseminate information to public on most significant hazards, their mitigation/prevention and proper response | Secure relevant literature from GEMA, FEMA, and other sources for local distribution                                                                        | EMA                    | Board of Commissioners | Webster      | 2027-2032     | Staff time | Operating Budgets | Ongoing |
|                                                                                                                                                                                            | Promote development of family disaster plans and supply kits                                                                                                | EMA                    | Board of Commissioners | Webster      | As needed     | Staff time | Operating Budgets | Ongoing |
|                                                                                                                                                                                            | Purchase subscription to mass communication software to disseminate alerts and messages to citizens via text, email, and telephone                          | Board of Commissioners | EMA                    | Webster      | 2027-2032     | \$2,500    | Operating Budgets | Ongoing |
| Increase public awareness of hazard mitigation to continue public education programs through print and broadcast media                                                                     | Provide media with information of local mitigation efforts and emergency response preparedness                                                              | Board of Commissioners | Sheriff's Office       | Webster      | As needed     | \$100/year | Operating Budgets | Ongoing |
| Institutionalize hazard mitigation in                                                                                                                                                      | Inform chief administrative officers and elected officials of long-term                                                                                     | Board of Commissioners | EMA                    | Webster      | Annually      | Staff time | Operating Budgets | Ongoing |

|                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                            |                                            |         |           |              |                   |         |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|---------|-----------|--------------|-------------------|---------|
| governmental decision-making by incorporating hazard mitigation into capital improvement budgeting and                                  | benefits of incorporating hazard mitigation into capital budgeting/purchasing.                                                                                                                                                                              |                                            |                                            |         |           |              |                   |         |
|                                                                                                                                         | Local government and constitutional officers adopt policy of; (1) duplicating existing, essential records, (2) duplicating essential records annually thereafter, and (3) designating a secure, off-site depository for copies of essential public records. | Courthouse Officials, Board of Ed., Health | Courthouse Officials, Board of Ed., Health | Webster | Annually  | \$10,000     | Local             | Ongoing |
|                                                                                                                                         | Secure from GEMA and the Economic Development Administration information which can be used to educate the business community of the need to have duplicate copies of essential records securely stored off-site.                                            | EMA                                        | Business Community                         | Webster | Annually  | Staff time   | Operating Budgets | Ongoing |
| Improve the comprehensive mitigation strategy                                                                                           | Dedicate one of the quarterly meetings to formal, annual review of mitigation strategy implementation.                                                                                                                                                      | EMA                                        | Emergency Response Agencies                | Webster | Annually  | Staff time   | Operating Budgets | Ongoing |
|                                                                                                                                         | Perform a detailed, in-house review of local preparations and response as soon as practical after a disaster event.                                                                                                                                         | EMA                                        | Emergency Response Agencies                | Webster | As needed | Staff Time   | Operating Budgets | Ongoing |
| Maintain as much continuity of public and private operations (community life) as possible during and immediately after a disaster event | Continue regular meetings among representatives of elected bodies, Health Departments, DFCS, Red Cross, Family Connections Collaborative, emergency response agencies, etc.                                                                                 | Board of Commissioners                     | EMA                                        | Webster | Monthly   | Staff time   | Operating Budgets | Ongoing |
|                                                                                                                                         | Request the Webster County Board of Commissioners to make an appeal to the Middle Flint Regional E-911 Authority to acquire and store off-site in a                                                                                                         | Board of Commissioners                     | EMA                                        | Webster | 2027-2032 | \$375-\$400K | FEMA/GEMA         | Ongoing |

|  |                                                                                                                                                |                        |                                             |         |           |                    |                  |         |
|--|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------------------|---------|-----------|--------------------|------------------|---------|
|  | "hardened" facility, a self-propelled, mobile, communications vehicle for emergency use by Webster and other member jurisdictions.             |                        |                                             |         |           |                    |                  |         |
|  | Secure and distribute literature which identifies actions that can be taken to help achieve public and private sector continuity of operations | EMA                    | EMA                                         | Webster | 2027-2032 | Staff time         | Operating Budget | Ongoing |
|  | Initiate periodic drills to test ability of critical facilities to maintain continuity of operations                                           | EMA                    | Emergency Response Agencies, Private Sector | Webster | Annually  | \$1,000 staff time | Operating Budget | Ongoing |
|  | Determine critical backup generator needs and identify sources of financial assistance to help make purchases                                  | Board of Commissioners | EMA                                         | Webster | 2027-2032 | \$25-\$35K         | FEMA/GEMA        | Ongoing |

## Completed Goals and Objectives

| Previous Objective Number | Previous Action Step Number                                                                                                                               | Completion Status |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Objective 3</b>        | #2: Secure from GEMA/FEMA examples of successful mitigation efforts elsewhere that have local application, provide to media in a format "ready for print" | Completed 2021    |
| <b>Objective 6</b>        | #3: Petition E-911 Authority to identify source and seek funds to enable purchase of necessary hardware/software for reverse dial feature                 | Completed 2021    |

## NATURAL HAZARDS ACTION PLAN AND MITIGATION STRATEGIES

| Objective                                                                                                                 | Action Item                                                                                                                                           | Organizations<br>Responsible | Coordinating        | Jurisdiction             | Timeline                               | Cost                          | Funding<br>Source      | Status  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|---------|
| TORNADO                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                       |                              |                     |                          |                                        |                               |                        |         |
| Goal 1: Reduce the potential for loss of life and damage to property which commonly results from tornados.                |                                                                                                                                                       |                              |                     |                          |                                        |                               |                        |         |
| Reduce the risk of personal injury during a tornado event                                                                 | Distribute relevant literature with issuance of building permits                                                                                      | Bd of Commissioners          | County              | Webster (Countywide EMA) | As needed                              | \$500 for staff time & copies | Dept. Operating Budget | Ongoing |
|                                                                                                                           | Adopt environmental/housing code/nuisance ordinance                                                                                                   | Bd of Commissioners          | Bd of Commissioners | Webster                  | As needed                              | Staff Time                    | Dept. Operating Budget | Ongoing |
| Educate the citizenry on tornado threats and safety issues                                                                | Continue providing media with public service announcements and “print ready” articles on tornado safety                                               | EMA                          | EMA                 | Webster                  | Annually                               | \$500 for staff time          | Dept. Operating Budget | Ongoing |
|                                                                                                                           | Promote regular tornado drills at industrial sites                                                                                                    | Business/Industry            | EMA                 | Webster                  | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of every month | Staff Time                    | Local                  | Ongoing |
| Goal 2: Enhance local government’s ability to respond efficiently to emergency needs both during and after tornado event. |                                                                                                                                                       |                              |                     |                          |                                        |                               |                        |         |
| Provide emergency facilities, equipment, and mutual aid agreements to facilitate prompt and appropriate response          | Survey critical facilities to identify deficiencies which need to be addressed to “harden” against the risk of damage from tornadic winds             | EMA                          | EMA                 | Webster                  | Annually                               | Staff Time                    | Dept. Operating Budget | Ongoing |
|                                                                                                                           | Determine facility needs (size, location), identify and pursue outside source(s) of funding with which to construct the necessary hardened facilities | Bd of Commissioners          | EMA                 | Webster                  | 2027-2032                              | +\$400K Construction          | Local                  | Ongoing |
|                                                                                                                           | Perform annual review of all intra- and inter-jurisdictional mutual aid agreements                                                                    | Bd of Commissioners          | EMA                 | Webster                  | Annually                               | \$500 for staff time          | Local                  | Ongoing |
| THUNDERSTORM (LIGHTNING, THUNDERSTORM WIND, HAIL)                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                       |                              |                     |                          |                                        |                               |                        |         |

| Goal 1: Reduce the potential for loss of life and damage to property that commonly results from thunderstorm winds               |                                                                                                                                                                         |                     |                     |         |           |                               |             |         |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------|-----------|-------------------------------|-------------|---------|
| Reduce the risk of property damage resulting from thunderstorm winds                                                             | Survey critical facilities to identify deficiencies which need to be addressed to “harden” against the risk of damage from thunderstorm winds                           | EMA                 | EMA                 | Webster | Annually  | Staff Time                    | Local       | Ongoing |
|                                                                                                                                  | Determine facility needs (size, location), identify and pursue outside source(s) of funding with which to construct the necessary hardened facilities.                  | Bd of Commissioners | EMA                 | Webster | 2027-2032 | \$400K Construction           | Local, GEMA | Ongoing |
|                                                                                                                                  | Perform annual review of all intra- and inter-jurisdictional mutual aid agreements                                                                                      | Bd of Commissioners | EMA                 | Webster | Annually  | \$500 for staff time          | Local       | Ongoing |
|                                                                                                                                  | Adopt environmental/housing ordinances to reduce the presence of debris from the community that could become lethal projectiles during a thunderstorm event             | Bd of Commissioners | Bd of Commissioners | Webster | 2027-2032 | Stagg Time                    | Local       | Ongoing |
| Goal 2: Reduce the potential for injury (and possible loss of life) and damage to property that commonly results from hailstorms |                                                                                                                                                                         |                     |                     |         |           |                               |             |         |
| Reduce the risk of personal injury during hailstorm events                                                                       | Continue encouraging the general public to purchase weather radios                                                                                                      | EMA                 | EMA                 | Webster | Quarterly | \$0                           | Local       | Ongoing |
|                                                                                                                                  | Educate citizens about the importance of (1) monitoring weather information, (2) using weather radios in the home and workplace and (3) heeding public weather warnings | EMA                 | EMA                 | Webster | Quarterly | \$500 for staff time          | Local       | Ongoing |
| Protect the community’s agricultural base                                                                                        | Disseminate information through farm programs of                                                                                                                        | FSA                 | County Extension    | Webster | As needed | \$500 for staff time & copies | Local       | Ongoing |

|                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                       |                     |                     |         |                                        |                     |                        |         |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------|----------------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|---------|
|                                                                                                                             | the value of crop insurance participation                                                                                                             |                     |                     |         |                                        |                     |                        |         |
| <b>HURRICANE/TROPICAL STORM</b>                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                       |                     |                     |         |                                        |                     |                        |         |
| <b>Goal 1: Reduce the potential for loss of life and damage to property that commonly results from tropical storm winds</b> |                                                                                                                                                       |                     |                     |         |                                        |                     |                        |         |
| Reduce the risk of property damage resulting from tropical storm winds                                                      | Survey critical facilities to identify deficiencies which need to be addressed to “harden” against the risk of damage from tropical storm winds       | EMA                 | EMA                 | Webster | 2027-2032                              | Staff Time          | Dept. Operating Budget | Ongoing |
|                                                                                                                             | Adopt housing code/nuisance ordinance                                                                                                                 | Bd of Commissioners | Bd of Commissioners | Webster | 2027-2032                              | Staff Time          | Dept. Operating Budget | Ongoing |
| Educate the citizenry on tornado threat and safety issues                                                                   | Continue providing media with public service announcements and “print ready” articles on tornado safety                                               | EMA                 | EMA                 | Webster | 2027-2032                              | Staff Time          | Dept. Operating Budget | Ongoing |
|                                                                                                                             | Promote regular tornado drills at industrial sites                                                                                                    | Business/Industry   | EMA                 | Webster | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of every month | \$0                 | Local                  | Ongoing |
| <b>Goal 2: Remove conflicts between development and flood prone areas</b>                                                   |                                                                                                                                                       |                     |                     |         |                                        |                     |                        |         |
| Ensure that future development is outside the 100-year flood plain                                                          | Adopt (NFIP compliant) flood damage prevention ordinance                                                                                              | County              | EMA                 | Webster | 2027-2032                              | \$0                 | Dept. Operating Budget | Ongoing |
|                                                                                                                             | Review existing ordinances, development regulations, and building codes for inclusion of hazard mitigation efforts                                    | EMA                 | EMA                 | Webster | 2027-2032                              | Staff Time          | Dept. Operating Budget | Ongoing |
|                                                                                                                             | Determine facility needs (size, location), identify and pursue outside source(s) of funding with which to construct the necessary hardened facilities | Bd of Commissioners | EMA                 | Webster | 2027-2032                              | \$400K Construction | Local, GEMA            | Ongoing |

|                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                     |                     |         |               |                  |                                 |         |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------|---------------|------------------|---------------------------------|---------|
|                                                                                                                              | Perform annual review of all intra- and inter-jurisdictional mutual aid agreements                                                                                                                     | Bd of Commissioners | EMA                 | Webster | 2027-2032     | \$0              | Local                           | Ongoing |
| <b>INLAND FLOODING</b>                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                     |                     |         |               |                  |                                 |         |
| <b>Goal 1: Remove conflicts between development and flood prone areas</b>                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                     |                     |         |               |                  |                                 |         |
| Ensure that future development is outside the 100-year flood plain                                                           | Enforce NFIP compliant flood damage prevention ordinance                                                                                                                                               | Bd of Commissioners | Bd of Commissioners | Webster | 2027-2032     | \$250 staff time | Local                           | Ongoing |
|                                                                                                                              | Create digital flood insurance rate maps                                                                                                                                                               | GEMA/FEMA           | Bd of Commissioners | Webster | 2027-2032     | \$0              | Funding source to be identified | Ongoing |
|                                                                                                                              | Review existing ordinances, development regulations, and building codes for inclusion of hazard mitigation efforts                                                                                     | Bd of Commissioners | Bd of Commissioners | Webster | 2027-2032     | Staff Time       | Local                           | Ongoing |
| <b>DROUGHT</b>                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                     |                     |         |               |                  |                                 |         |
| <b>Goal 1: Maintain economic stability and growth during periods of drought</b>                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                     |                     |         |               |                  |                                 |         |
| Maintain the essential services agriculture needs to minimize drought-related losses                                         | Continue activity within agriculture community to pursue additional irrigation, reservoir development, lowering well intakes where appropriate, and low interest financing to enable such improvements | NRCS-FSA            | Extension Service   | Webster | 2027-2032     | \$18,000         | Dept. Operating Budget          | Ongoing |
|                                                                                                                              | Pursue funding for reservoir development                                                                                                                                                               | Bd of Commissioners | NRCS                | Webster | 2027-2032     | \$200K           | USDA                            | Ongoing |
| Maintain firefighting capabilities in time of drought by developing and maintaining resources needed for rural fire fighting | Maintain fire breaks                                                                                                                                                                                   | Forrest Owners      | GFC                 | Webster | 2027-2032     | \$75/hr          | Forest Owners                   | Ongoing |
|                                                                                                                              | Identify appropriate sites and place dry hydrants                                                                                                                                                      | Bd of Commissioners | NRCS/Landowners     | Webster | Semi-annually | ± \$7,500        | Local/NRCS                      | Ongoing |
|                                                                                                                              | Purchase specialized equipment for fighting wildfires                                                                                                                                                  | Bd of Commissioners | EMA                 | Webster | 2027-2032     | \$18,000         | Fireworks Grant                 | Ongoing |

|                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                              |                          |                                     |         |           |            |                                |         |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------|-----------|------------|--------------------------------|---------|
|                                                                                                                                   | Participate in specialized training for fighting wildfires                                                                   | Bd of Commissioners      | EMA                                 | Webster | Annually  | <\$250     | Georgia Forestry Commission    | Ongoing |
| <b>EXTREME TEMPERTURES (NEW)</b>                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                              |                          |                                     |         |           |            |                                |         |
| <b>Goal 1:</b>                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                              |                          |                                     |         |           |            |                                |         |
| Have emergency shelter ready and available to meet the needs of potential extreme temperature victims who are inadequately housed | Provide heating, cooling, charging stations                                                                                  | EMA                      | Red Cross, Family Connections, DFCS | Webster | As needed | \$45,000   | EMA Budget                     | Ongoing |
|                                                                                                                                   | Provide donated water for victims suffering from extreme heat and its impacts (i.e., heat stroke, blackouts, burnouts, etc.) | EMA                      | Red Cross, Family Connections, DFCS | Webster | 2027-2032 | Staff Time | Dept. Operating Budget         | Ongoing |
| <b>Goal 2: Minimize, and to the extent possible prevent, the dangers and damage caused by extreme temperatures</b>                |                                                                                                                              |                          |                                     |         |           |            |                                |         |
| Implement proactive measures to prevent damage to property                                                                        | Distribute relevant literature with issuance of building permits                                                             | Bd of Commissioners, EMA | Bd of Commissioners, EMA            | Webster | As needed | Staff Time | Dept. Operating Budget         | Ongoing |
|                                                                                                                                   | Compile a library of information and public service announcements ready for print, broadcast, or other distribution          | EMA                      | EMA                                 | Webster | Annually  | Staff Time | Dept. Operating Budget         | Ongoing |
|                                                                                                                                   | Winterize all emergency vehicles as part of routine maintenance                                                              | EMA                      | EMA                                 | Webster | As needed | <\$250     | Dept. Operating Budget         | Ongoing |
| <b>WILDFIRES (NEW)</b>                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                              |                          |                                     |         |           |            |                                |         |
| <b>Goal 1: Increase public awareness of the danger of wildfires and the prevention of wildfires.</b>                              |                                                                                                                              |                          |                                     |         |           |            |                                |         |
| Disseminate information to the public regarding wildfire prevention and safety.                                                   | Publicize materials on wildfire prevention and safety, including burn bans                                                   | EMA                      | EMA                                 | Webster | Annually  | Staff Time | GFC                            | Ongoing |
|                                                                                                                                   | Reinstate the "Firewise" program once Chief Ranger is hired                                                                  | EMA                      | GFC                                 | Webster | Annually  | Staff Time | GFC                            | Ongoing |
|                                                                                                                                   | Increase promotion of the EMA social media account and County Website to more                                                | EMA, Bd of Commissioners | EMA, Bd of Commissioners            | Webster | 2027-2032 | Staff Time | Dept. Operating Budget; County | Ongoing |

|                                                                        |                                                                                           |                 |     |         |           |          |                                              |         |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|-----|---------|-----------|----------|----------------------------------------------|---------|
|                                                                        | effectively share information with residents                                              |                 |     |         |           |          |                                              |         |
| <b>Goal 2: Elevate the level of fire suppression in the community.</b> |                                                                                           |                 |     |         |           |          |                                              |         |
| Improve fire-fighting capabilities in Webster County                   | Apply for grant funds with which to purchase fire-fighting tools, equipment, and vehicles | Fire Department | EMA | Webster | Annually  | \$48,000 | GEMA, FEMA, GFC, Fireworks grant, Sumter EMC | Ongoing |
|                                                                        | Establish new emergency notification systems "First Due"                                  | EMA             | EMA | Webster | 2027      | \$13,000 | Dept. Operating Budget                       | Ongoing |
|                                                                        | Update the Community Wildfire Protection Program (CWPP)                                   | GFC             | EMA | Webster | 2027-2028 | \$25,000 | GFC                                          | Ongoing |

*Note: Action items notated as ongoing are carried over from the previous plan\**

## Completed Goals and Objectives

| Hazard  | Goal #                                                                                                                     | Previous Objective Number                                                                                                        | Previous Action Step Number                                                                                                                 | Status             |
|---------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Tornado | Goal #1: Reduce the potential for loss of life and damage to property which commonly results from tornadoes.               | Objective 1.1- Reduce the risk of personal injury during a tornado event                                                         | Action Step 1.1.3.1- Confer with appropriate GEMA representatives and vendors for direct comparison of pros and cons of each warning method | Completed          |
| Tornado | Goal #2- Enhance local government's ability to respond efficiently to emergency needs both during and after tornado event. | Objective 2.1.- Provide emergency facilities, equipment, and mutual aid agreements to facilitate prompt and appropriate response | Action Step 2.1.1.2- Renovate the gym at 40 Cemetery Road for use as a storm shelter.                                                       | No longer pursuing |
| Tornado | Goal #2- Enhance local government's ability to respond efficiently to emergency needs both during and after tornado event. | Objective 2.1.- Provide emergency facilities, equipment, and mutual aid agreements to facilitate prompt and appropriate response | Action Step 2.1.2.1- Determine EOC and communication needs, prepare plans, and pursue funding, for any necessary improvements               | Completed          |

|                     |                                                                                                                       |                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                             |                    |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Thunderstorm</b> | Goal #1- Reduce the potential for loss of life and damage to property that commonly results from thunderstorm winds   | Objective 1.1- Reduce the risk of property damage resulting from thunderstorm winds    | Action Step 1.2.1.2- Renovate the gym at 40 Cemetery Road for use as a storm shelter.                                                       | No longer pursuing |
| <b>Thunderstorm</b> | Goal #1- Reduce the potential for loss of life and damage to property that commonly results from thunderstorm winds   | Objective 1.1- Reduce the risk of property damage resulting from thunderstorm winds    | Action Step 1.3.1.1-Determine EOC and communication needs, prepare plans, and pursue funding, for any necessary improvements                | Completed          |
| <b>Hurricane</b>    | Goal #1-Reduce the potential for loss of life and damage to property that commonly results from tropical storm winds  | Objective 1.1-Reduce the risk of property damage resulting from tropical storm winds   | Action Step 1.1.2.1-Confer with appropriate GEMA representatives and vendors for direct comparison of pros and cons of each warning method  | Completed          |
| <b>Hurricane</b>    | Goal #1- Reduce the potential for loss of life and damage to property that commonly results from tropical storm winds | Objective 2.1.- Reduce the risk of property damage resulting from tropical storm winds | Action Step 1.1.2.1- Confer with appropriate GEMA representatives and vendors for direct comparison of pros and cons of each warning method | Completed          |
| <b>Hurricane</b>    | Goal #2- Remove conflicts between development and flood prone areas                                                   | Objective 2.1.- Ensure that future development is outside the 100-year flood plain     | Action Step 2.1.1.3- Renovate the gym at 40 Cemetery Road for use as a storm shelter.                                                       | No longer pursuing |

## Chapter Five: Technological Hazards Mitigation Strategy

Chapter five lists broad community goals, and it determines specific objectives and action plans for each of the technological hazards identified in Chapters Three. As part of the update process, the Planning Committee performed a comprehensive review of the goals and objectives in the 2026 Plan Update. Existing policies, regulations, ordinances, and land uses were identified for each hazard. The planning committee also revisited the STAPLEE Criteria (Social, Technical, Administrative, Political, Legal, Economic, and Environmental in evaluating alternative mitigation actions. Table 5.1 is a brief description of each chapter section and a summary of the changes made.

**Table 5.1: Updates to Section**

| Chapter Three Section                            | Updates to Section                                                                                                                                                                           |
|--------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Individual Mitigation Goals and Range of Options | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group together before goals and objectives</li> </ul>                                                                                               |
| Hazardous Materials                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formatting change-use of tables</li> <li>• Consolidated Tasks and Objectives</li> </ul>                                                             |
| Radiological Releases                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Previously titled “Nuclear Power Plant Accident”</li> <li>• Formatting change-use of tables</li> <li>• Consolidated Tasks and Objectives</li> </ul> |
| Dam Failure                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formatting change-use of tables</li> <li>• Consolidated Tasks and Objectives</li> </ul>                                                             |
| Emergent Infectious Disease                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Hazard</li> </ul>                                                                                                                               |
| Infrastructure Failure                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Hazard</li> </ul>                                                                                                                               |

## TECHNOLOGICAL HAZARDS ACTION PLAN AND MITIGATION STRATEGIES

| Objective                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Action Item                                                                                                                           | Organizations                                          |                 | Jurisdiction             | Timeline   | Cost       | Funding Source         | Status  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|------------|------------|------------------------|---------|
|                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                       | Responsible                                            | Coordinating    |                          |            |            |                        |         |
| HAZARDOUS MATERIAL SPILLS                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                       |                                                        |                 |                          |            |            |                        |         |
| Goal 1: Protect the community from potential disasters caused by hazardous materials spills resulting from transportation accidents                                                                         |                                                                                                                                       |                                                        |                 |                          |            |            |                        |         |
| Be current with risks and appropriate mitigation measures associated with hazardous materials by securing and maintaining active membership(s) and participating in applicable emergency response training. | Establish line item in annual EMA budget for associational and organizational membership(s)                                           | Bd. of Commissioners                                   | EMA             | Webster                  | 2027-2032  | \$14,00/yr | Local, GEMA            | Ongoing |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Network with emergency response personnel/staff at local, state, and federal levels                                                   | Fire Dept., EMS, Law Enforcement, and Bd. of Education | EMA             | Webster (Countywide EMA) | 2x monthly | Staff Time | Local                  | Ongoing |
| Empower all emergency responders to, when and where appropriate, initiate mitigation actions unilaterally by obtaining legal authority for all emergency responders to issue appropriate directives         | Instruct legal counsel to investigate options and make recommendations for local action                                               | Bd. of Commissioners                                   | EMA             | Webster                  | 2027-2032  | ±\$500     | Local                  | Ongoing |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Enhance traffic law enforcement                                                                                                       | Bd. of Commissioners                                   | Law Enforcement | Webster                  | 2027-2032  | Staff Time | Local                  | Ongoing |
| Maintain safe roadways by budgeting appropriately for roadway maintenance                                                                                                                                   | Monitor roadway/railroad intersections for condition and visibility, signage, and vegetation along roadways for necessary maintenance | Public Works Depts.                                    | Webster         | Webster                  | 2027-2032  | Staff Time | Staff Time             | Ongoing |
| RADIOLOGICAL RELEASES                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                       |                                                        |                 |                          |            |            |                        |         |
| Goal 1: Continue preparedness strategies for a possible nuclear power plant accident or fallout.                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                       |                                                        |                 |                          |            |            |                        |         |
| Continue working relationship with Early County regarding training and information by attending                                                                                                             | Attend the information meetings and training sessions.                                                                                | Public Works Depts.                                    | Webster         | Webster                  | 2027-2032  | Staff Time | Dept. Operating Budget | Ongoing |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                            |                             |          |                |               |                           |                        |         |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------|----------------|---------------|---------------------------|------------------------|---------|
| called preparedness and response meetings.                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                            |                             |          |                |               |                           |                        |         |
| <b>Goal 2: Continue to keep citizens informed as to proper procedures for nuclear power plant accidents or fallout.</b>                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                            |                             |          |                |               |                           |                        |         |
| Disseminate information via print or media regarding nuclear fallout and proper procedure by publishing information from the meetings in Early County & GEMA regarding proper procedure in case of radiological releases. | Provide information to citizens through the print or other media regarding procedures in case of nuclear fallout or power plant accidents. | Public Works Depts.         | Webster  | Webster        | 2027-2032     | Staff Time                | Dept. Operating Budget | Ongoing |
| <b>DAM FAILURE</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                            |                             |          |                |               |                           |                        |         |
| <b>Goal 1: Protect lives and property downstream of the community's largest local dams</b>                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                            |                             |          |                |               |                           |                        |         |
| Identify properties at risk down stream of dams and sources of funding to map dam "shadows"                                                                                                                               | Map topography of dam "shadows" and layer new information with map of existing development                                                 | Webster                     | RDC      | Webster        | 2027-2032     | \$2K-\$5K                 | OHS/GEMA               | Ongoing |
| <b>EMERGENT INFECTIOUS DISEASES (NEW)</b>                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                            |                             |          |                |               |                           |                        |         |
| <b>Goal 1: Preserve community health by preventing the spread of diseases that pose a significant threat to the community</b>                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                            |                             |          |                |               |                           |                        |         |
| Develop the capacity to respond appropriately and promptly to an epidemic outbreak                                                                                                                                        | Inventory farms critical facilities within the county to track potential livestock diseases.                                               | EMA, Board of Commissioners | EMA      | Webster County | 2027-2032     | Nominal, \$700 staff time | Local                  | Ongoing |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Update and maintain Pandemic Plan                                                                                                          | EMA, EMS                    | EMA, EMS | Webster County | Every 4 years | Staff Time                | Dept. Operating Budget | Ongoing |
| Educating residents on county health and safety                                                                                                                                                                           | Utilize social media to inform citizens on how to properly prevent and slow the spread of disease.                                         | EMA                         | EMA      | Webster County | Annually      | \$45,000                  | EMA Budget             | Ongoing |
| <b>INFRASTRUCTURE FAILURE (NEW)</b>                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                            |                             |          |                |               |                           |                        |         |
| <b>Goal 1:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                            |                             |          |                |               |                           |                        |         |
| Maintain and updated degrading roads                                                                                                                                                                                      | Maintain scored unpaved roads and mapped culverts                                                                                          | EMA                         | EMA      | Webster County | As needed     | Staff Time                | Dept. Operating Budget | Ongoing |

|                                                                  |                                                                        |                                    |                              |                |           |                           |               |           |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------|-----------|---------------------------|---------------|-----------|
|                                                                  | Map water infrastructure systems                                       | Public Works, Water Authority, BOC | RVRC                         | Webster County | 2027      | \$20,000                  | Grant Funding | Ongoing   |
|                                                                  | Remove debris from drainage structures along roads before storm season | Public Works                       | Board of Commissioners, GDOT | Webster County | As needed | \$500,000                 | GDOT          | Ongoing   |
| <b>Goal 2: Increase capacity of existing infrastructure</b>      |                                                                        |                                    |                              |                |           |                           |               |           |
| Increase capacity of water and sewer infrastructure              | Upgrade well software from analog to digital                           | BOC                                | BOC                          | Webster County | As needed | \$45,000                  | EMA Budget    | Completed |
|                                                                  | Apply for grant funding to replace aging water lines                   | BOC                                | BOC                          | Webster County | As needed | Nominal, \$700 staff time | Grant Funding | Ongoing   |
| Prevent blackouts and brownouts by enforcing the electric system | Install pole infrastructure to be more resistant to high winds         | Sumter EMC, GA Board               | BOC                          | As needed      | As needed | No Cost                   | Sumter EMC    | Ongoing   |

## Chapter Six: Execution of Plan

Table 6.1 is a brief description of each chapter section and a summary of the changes made.

**Table 6.1: Updates to Section**

| Chapter Five Section             | Updates to Section                                                                                                                                                        |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Implementation Action Plan       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Updated language</li></ul>                                                                                                        |
| Evaluation, Monitoring, Updating | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Updated language</li></ul>                                                                                                        |
| Plan Update and Maintenance      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Updated language</li><li>• Added Incorporation of Hazard Disaster Mitigation into other plans/planning measures section</li></ul> |

### IMPLEMENTATION ACTION PLAN

#### Administrative Actions

The chief elected officials and the appointed officials of Webster County in the executive committee are responsible for the administrative personnel and operations of the local government and the mitigation activities proposed in this plan. The Emergency Management Agency (EMA) coordinates disaster planning, develops Standard Operating Procedures, and coordinates all local and state resources involved in conducting disaster operations. The EMA maintains emergency notification rosters for 24-hour emergency notification, and other data to ensure prompt and effective response.

It is also the responsibility of the EMA to implement this plan after the County Commission has authorized the adoption of this plan, after GEMA has given its approval, and prior to FEMA approval. To do this, the officials will present the necessary policy changes, ordinance adoptions, or other revisions in procedures to the governing body, and make recommendations on how to accomplish the goals of this mitigation plan. The action steps have to be implemented, and the executive committee has to report on the progress. The EMA Director shall assume the responsibility to coordinate and support these activities, and to oversee the implementation of the plan. The EMA Director also assures the upkeep and maintenance of the plan and is authorized to call a committee meeting to review and update the plan at least every five years. Completion of mitigation projects shall be noted in the document, and additional mitigation measures shall be developed.

#### Authority and Responsibility

The office of the EMA Director has the authority and responsibility for implementation vested. The EMA Director will brief the appropriate officials concerning their roles and responsibilities in emergency management and on this plan. Responsible Organizations to conduct diverse mitigation measures are the following.

##### **County:**

- County Officials
- EMA
- Fire Department
- Law Enforcement

- Hazard Mitigation Committee
- Public Services and Utilities
- School Board
- Senior Center

***Other Agencies:***

- American Red Cross
- DFCS Department of Family and Children Services
- FEMA
- Georgia DOT
- GEMA

For a list of mitigation activities prioritized by Responsible Organizations, please refer to Appendix D.

## **Prioritization: Methodology, and Use of Cost Benefit**

For this plan to be effective, its contents must be known and understood by those who are responsible for its implementation. The Hazard Mitigation Plan Committee was tasked to prioritize the alternative mitigation actions based on their perceived cost benefit, community benefit and/or support for the action, and the potential that the action will receive the necessary funding. Please see GEMA worksheet #4 Evaluate Alternative Mitigation Actions in Appendix D.

### ***Methodology***

The methodology used to prioritize the mitigation measures is review by committees. Each department identified as responsible organizations for an action step has to review the action steps. Those action steps which are not difficult to conduct, which have broad acceptance, and which are low-cost measures with local funding available, will be conducted first. Action steps, where funding is not certain, are tackled in a second step.

### ***Use of Cost Benefit***

Since purchases are involved in some of the action steps of the EMA office, the EMA Director will have to meet with county officials to review the costs and the benefits of the purchases. As soon as funding sources like grants are identified, a review of the purchase proposals must be conducted. The review of the county officials evaluates the costs and the foreseen benefits of the purchases and prioritizes them accordingly. Therefore, prioritization is based on the costs, the available funding, and the benefits of the projects.

### ***Use of Other Calculations***

Each department identified as responsible organization for an action step will review the action steps. Those action steps which are not difficult to conduct, and which are low-cost measures with local funding available, will be conducted first. Action steps, where funding is not certain, are addressed in a second step.

### ***Use of Other Review Structure***

No other review structures are identified at this moment but will be used if the need arises.

## **Incorporation of Local PDM Plan into other Plans/Planning Measures**

Webster County updated the Local Emergency Operations Plan in 2015. This Hazard Mitigation Plan will be among the documents reviewed for inclusion in these documents.

Pursuant to Georgia law, local governments must prepare and adopt a comprehensive plan to maintain eligibility for state grants, loans, and/or permits. All three jurisdictions are diligent in maintaining their “Qualified Local Government” status. Although the chief elected official of the jurisdiction is accountable for ensuring these plans are prepared in accordance with stringent state planning and procedural standards, and formally adopted, responsibility for ensuring this is accomplished is commonly deferred to the chief administrative official. The elected and/or appointed officials of all three jurisdictions, along with the EMA Director, serve on the hazard mitigation plan executive committee. Annual review and evaluation of this mitigation plan will serve to facilitate incorporation of the mitigation measures into daily management functions (budgeting, permit issuance) of the local governments as well as the joint local comprehensive plan. The current comprehensive plan for Webster County was adopted in 2024. The 2024 Unified Government of Webster County Comprehensive Plan will be update again in 2029. The River Valley Regional Commission has helped not only with the preparation of this hazard mitigation plan but has also assisted the community in maintaining compliance with state-mandated comprehensive and other planning requirements.

Elements of the 2021 local hazard mitigation plan were incorporated into the 2024 comprehensive plan update and the Local Emergency Operations Plan for Webster County to assist them in their planning efforts. Specifically, elements were included in the sections referencing ongoing environmental protection efforts by the county. Elements of the current hazard mitigation plan will be incorporated into any future planning documents.

## **EVALUATION, MONITORING, UPDATING**

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### **Method**

The Hazard Mitigation Committee will be responsible for evaluating the plan. The first task of the committee will be to determine the criteria to be used for evaluating the plan. Included among these criteria shall be:

- Is the risk assessment still appropriate, or has the nature or magnitude of the hazard and/or the vulnerability of the county changed over time?
- Are current resources appropriate for implementing this plan?
- Have members of the public been adequately involved in the process? Are their comments being heard?
- Do the goals and objectives continue to address expected conditions in Webster County?
- Have outcomes been adequate?
- Have lead agencies participated as originally proposed?
- What problems have occurred in the implementation process?

An evaluation handbook will be developed using the goals, objectives, tasks, and action steps of Chapters 4 and 5 as the format. This document will be used to record the name and contact information of the individual assigned responsibility for overseeing implementation of each action step included in the plan. These assignments will be made at the “organizational” meeting held after formal plan adoption. This handbook will be used by the executive committee to maintain a current, written record of progress made with plan implementation. The record of project information recorded during the course of the year(s) will be useful for the end-of-year evaluation (and five-year update). Future updates will use a similar format as the update for this plan. This process included monthly involvement of committee members at meetings to discuss each aspect of the plan. Each chapter was read and discussed.

If an update was needed, changes were made to the final document. The critical facilities were established in conjunction with the committee members and the tax assessor. The tax assessor also provided information on

building areas and values. The remainder of information to be updated involved research to several sources, to include U.S. Census Bureau, NCDC, CWPP, DNR, and GDOT. The same process described in this paragraph will be used for future updates of the plan.

## **Responsibility**

The Hazard Mitigation Committee will be responsible for evaluating the plan. The office of the EMA Director has the authority and responsibility to call the appropriate meeting of the Committee. The EMA Director will brief the appropriate officials concerning their roles and responsibilities in emergency management and in evaluating this plan.

## **Timeframe**

An evaluation and update of the plan shall be conducted at least every five years. The EMA Director will call a meeting of the Hazard Mitigation Committee for this purpose.

## **Reporting**

Changes to the Webster County Hazard Mitigation Plan will be reported to GEMA and FEMA.

## **Multi-Jurisdictional Strategy and Considerations**

The Webster County Emergency Management Agency is the authorized agent of Webster County for Hazard Mitigation planning. Upon GEMA approval of the Webster County Hazard Mitigation Plan, and prior to FEMA approval, the County Commission will publish their resolutions to adopt the plan and oversee the implementation of the actions prescribed in the Webster County Hazard Mitigation Plan. This precludes the need for each jurisdiction to produce different/separate action plans to manage hazard risks.

## **PLAN UPDATE AND MAINTENANCE**

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### **Public Involvement**

Public involvement will be assured for the review and update of this plan. The public is invited to serve on the Hazard Mitigation Committee and give input at the public hearings. Public hearings are a forum for expressing opinions and proposing mitigation strategies. The plan will be published, and copies will be kept at the Emergency Management Agency for review and comments. Contained in the plan will be the contact information of the EMA Director responsible for collecting and incorporating public comments in the plan.

### **Timeframe**

Updates to the Webster County Hazard Mitigation Plan will be made every five years. The EMA Director will coordinate, publish, and report changes to this plan as required. Updates are going to be needed if there are changes to the risk assessment, if problems have occurred in the implementation process, if deficiencies have been identified through drills and exercises, and when proposed mitigation actions have been completed. New mitigation projects will be identified at that point.

## CONCLUSION

Through the planning process necessary to create this Hazard Mitigation plan, the officials in Webster County have obtained a better understanding of the dangers of natural and technological hazards, assessed the community's vulnerability and risk through study of its disaster history, and developed strategies to mitigate the damaging effects of hazards. The planning committee, formally approved by the County Commission, held many work sessions, but also two public hearings, where the members of the community had the opportunity to comment and make suggestions about disaster mitigation. Efforts were taken to include as many persons as possible in the planning process.

The local adoption of this mitigation plan completes another important step. The community now has the task of implementing the action steps identified. Out of the prioritization of the goals and strategies, an action plan has evolved, giving Webster County the tools needed to be proactive rather than reactive to hazards and their destructive effects.

Webster County can capitalize on past successes in emergency preparedness, and continue its efforts to provide for the health, safety, and general well-being of the residents of Webster County, making the community a safer place to live and work.