



Hardee County Vulnerability Assessment Update

Central Florida Regional Planning Council
August 20, 2026

RESILIENT FLORIDA PROGRAM

Florida Statutes 380.093 (Established in 2021)



Building a stronger, more resilient Florida.

The Resilient Florida Program supports counties and municipalities in preparing for flooding, sea level rise, and extreme weather through planning, assessments, and infrastructure investments.



State-funded through the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP).

Empowering communities. Protecting Florida's future.



This program helps counties and municipalities make informed decisions today to protect our communities, infrastructure, economy, and quality of life for tomorrow.

THE RESILIENT FLORIDA PROGRAM SUPPORTS:



VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENTS

Identify flooding risks to critical infrastructure, community assets, and natural resources.



ADAPTATION PLANNING

Develop strategies and projects to reduce risk and build long-term community resilience.



STATEWIDE RESILIENCE PLANNING

Create consistent data, tools, and priorities to strengthen Florida's resilience statewide.



REGIONAL & LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS

Coordinate efforts across state agencies, regional entities, and local governments.



FUNDING & INVESTMENT SUPPORT

Position communities to compete for state and federal funding opportunities.

AWARDED VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT PROJECTS



Awarded to Hardee County

(includes Bowling Green and Zolfo Springs)

(Wauchula – developed their own – was included in the development)



CFRPC and Stakeholders
developed the Vulnerability
Assessment



FY 2022/2023 FDEP Funded
through Resilient Florida Program

WHY DOES THIS ASSESSMENT MATTER

Protection	Protecting Critical Infrastructure • Identifies Potential Flooding Impacts to Critical Infrastructure
Investment	Supporting Smarter Investments • Helps to prioritize flood mitigation efforts and resiliency projects
Funding	Strengthening Grant Competitiveness • FDEP's Resilient Florida, FDEM, Others
Long-Term	Long-Term County and Municipal Planning • CIPs, LMS, Comprehensive & Transportation Planning, Stormwater Planning, Adaptation Planning
Prepare	Preparing for Future Conditions • Evaluates future rainfall and flooding conditions

Project Partners

Public safety

Transportation

Utilities

**Building &
Housing**

**Community &
Economic
Development**

Education

Environment

Planning

**Parks,
Recreation &
Cultural
Resources**

**Human & Social
Services**

**Local Elected
Officials**

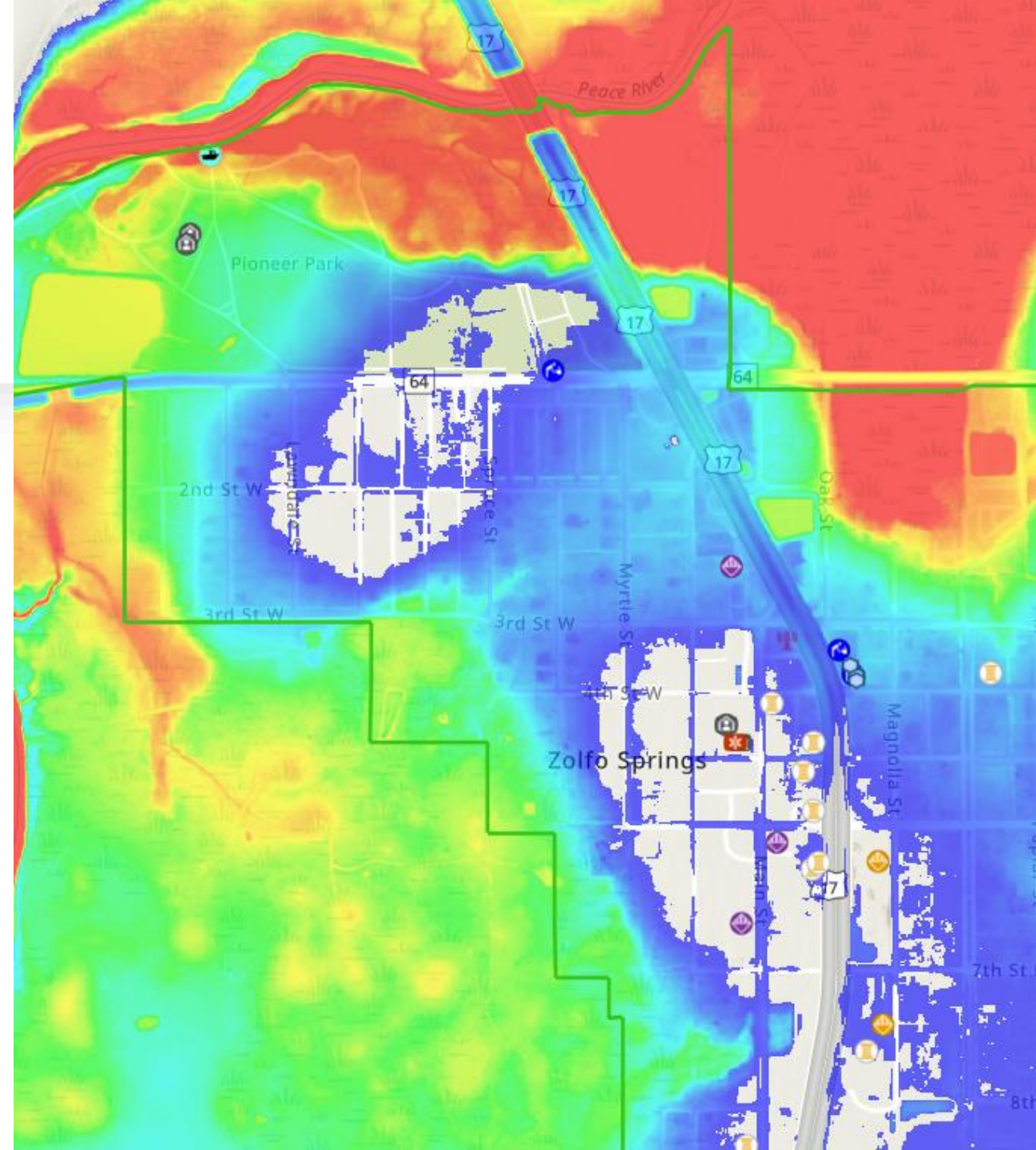
**Community
Leaders or
Champions**

**Researchers &
Scientists**

**State and
Federal
Governments,
NGO's**

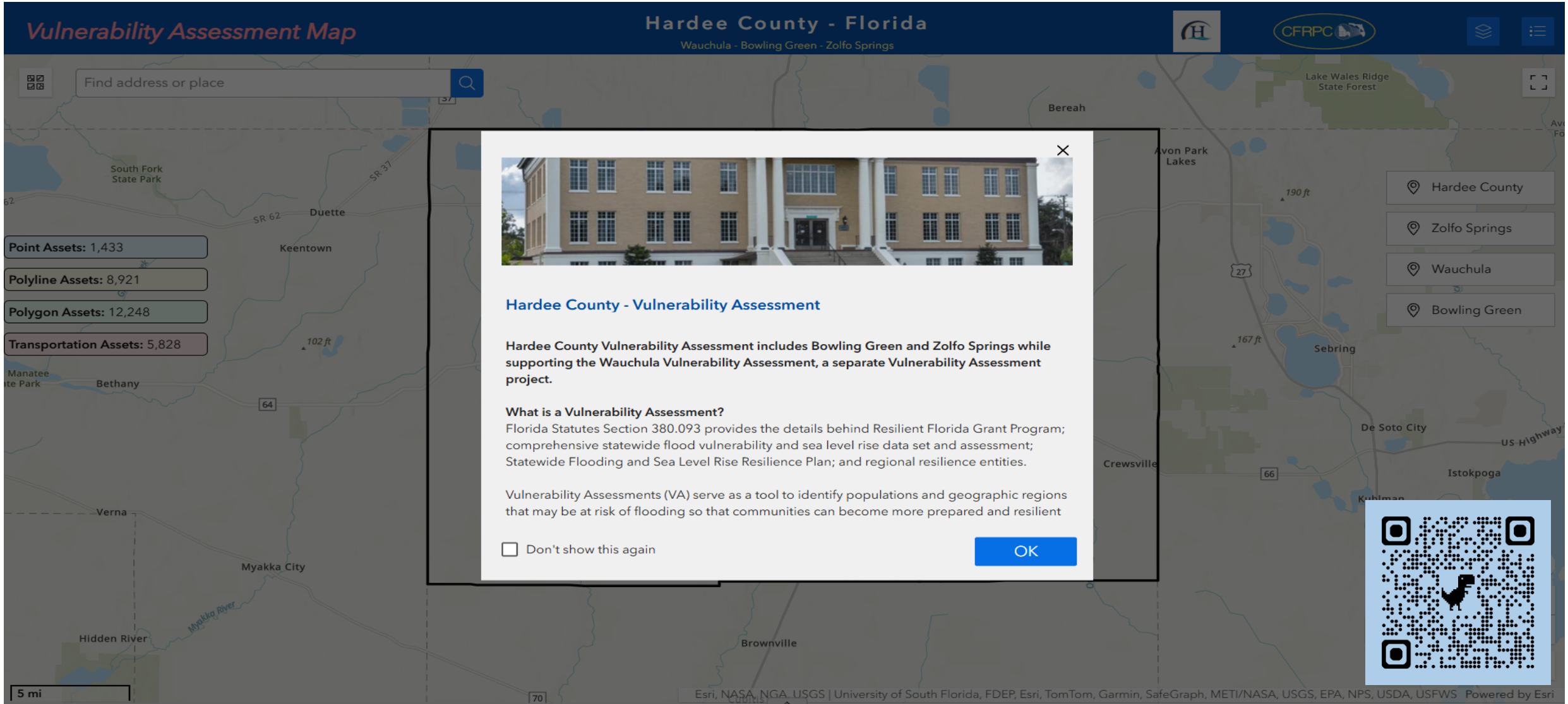
HOW THE VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT WORKED

- Identified critical assets
 - Transportation and Evacuation Routes
 - Critical Infrastructure
 - Critical Community and Emergency Facilities
 - Natural, Cultural, and Historical Resources
- Modeled future flood conditions (2040 & 2070)
 - 100-Yr/24-Hr 200-Yr/24-Hr 500-Yr/24-Hr
- Evaluated which assets are most exposed or sensitive to surrounding flood conditions



VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT INTERACTIVE DATA VIEWER

<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/b1415fc7d3d24f4384e55569191f0cba/>



KEY FINDINGS



Flooding risks are increasing in the future and affect multiple infrastructure systems across the Region.



Critical facilities and transportation networks may face operational impacts during major storm events into the future.



The VA can provide a prioritization for future resilience planning and investment decisions.



The assessment positions the jurisdictions to pursue future state and federal grant funding opportunities.



Coordination across jurisdictions and agencies is essential for long-term resilience planning.

WHAT STAGE ARE WE IN

Vulnerability Assessment

- Approved by FDEP

Adaptation Action Area Plans

- Finalized and Up Next

March 2026

Hardee County Vulnerability Assessment

FDEP AGREEMENT: 23PLN113



Prepared For:
Hardee County

412 West Orange Street,
Room 201 Wauchula,
Florida 33873

Prepared By:
CFRPC

555 E Church Street,
Bartow, Florida 33830





Coastal & Heartland National Estuary Partnership

Adaptation Action Area Plans

Coastal & Heartland National Estuary Partnership



- Part of US EPA National Estuary Program, funded by US Congress
- Across 10 counties in Central and Southwest Florida, including the Peace River basin.



Uniting Central and Southwest Florida to Protect Water and Wildlife

THE POWER OF PARTNERSHIP

CHNEP is

- Public-private partnership
- Consensus-based
- Non-regulatory
- Science-based
- Citizen-supported



Coastal & Heartland National Estuary Partnership
Uniting Central and Southwest Florida to protect water and wildlife

CHNEP COMMITTEE MEMBERS



Uniting Central and Southwest Florida to Protect Water and Wildlife

CHNEP'S ROLE IN THIS PROJECT

- For this project, CHNEP is providing:
 - Funding for Contractors' work
 - Project management support
 - Technical review of deliverables
 - Public education and outreach
 - Public project data access on CHNEP Water Atlas



CHNEP is also planning to assist long-term in the implementation of County's Vulnerability Assessment and Adaptation Action Area Plans.





Kimley-Horn and Associates

Hardee County Adaptation Action Area Plans



Adaptation Action Area Plans: Identification, Ranking, and Proposed Adaptive Strategies

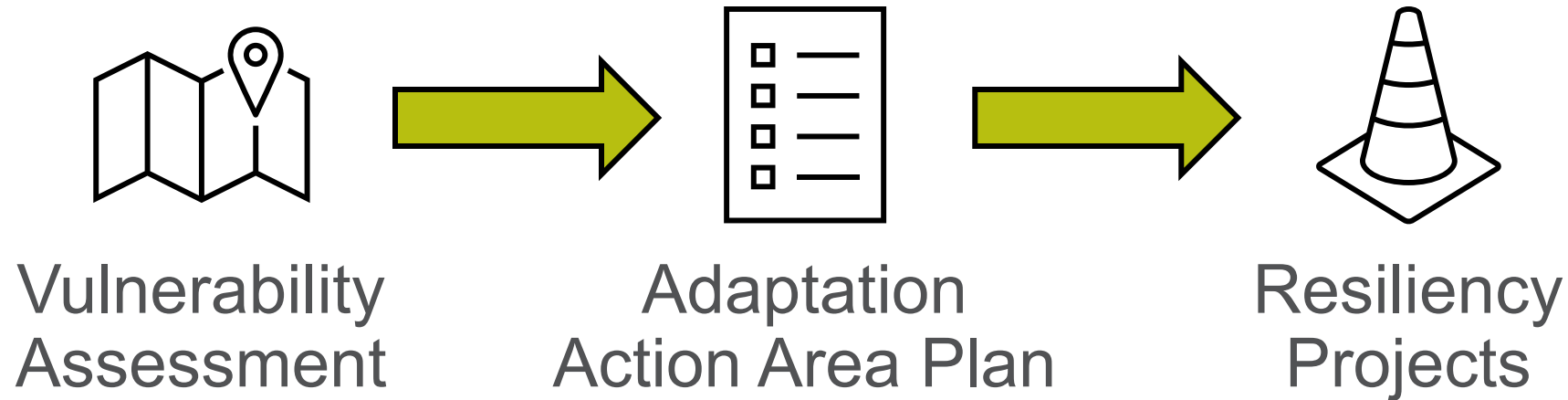
BOCC Meeting – Hardee County

Date: 8/20/2026

Kimley»Horn

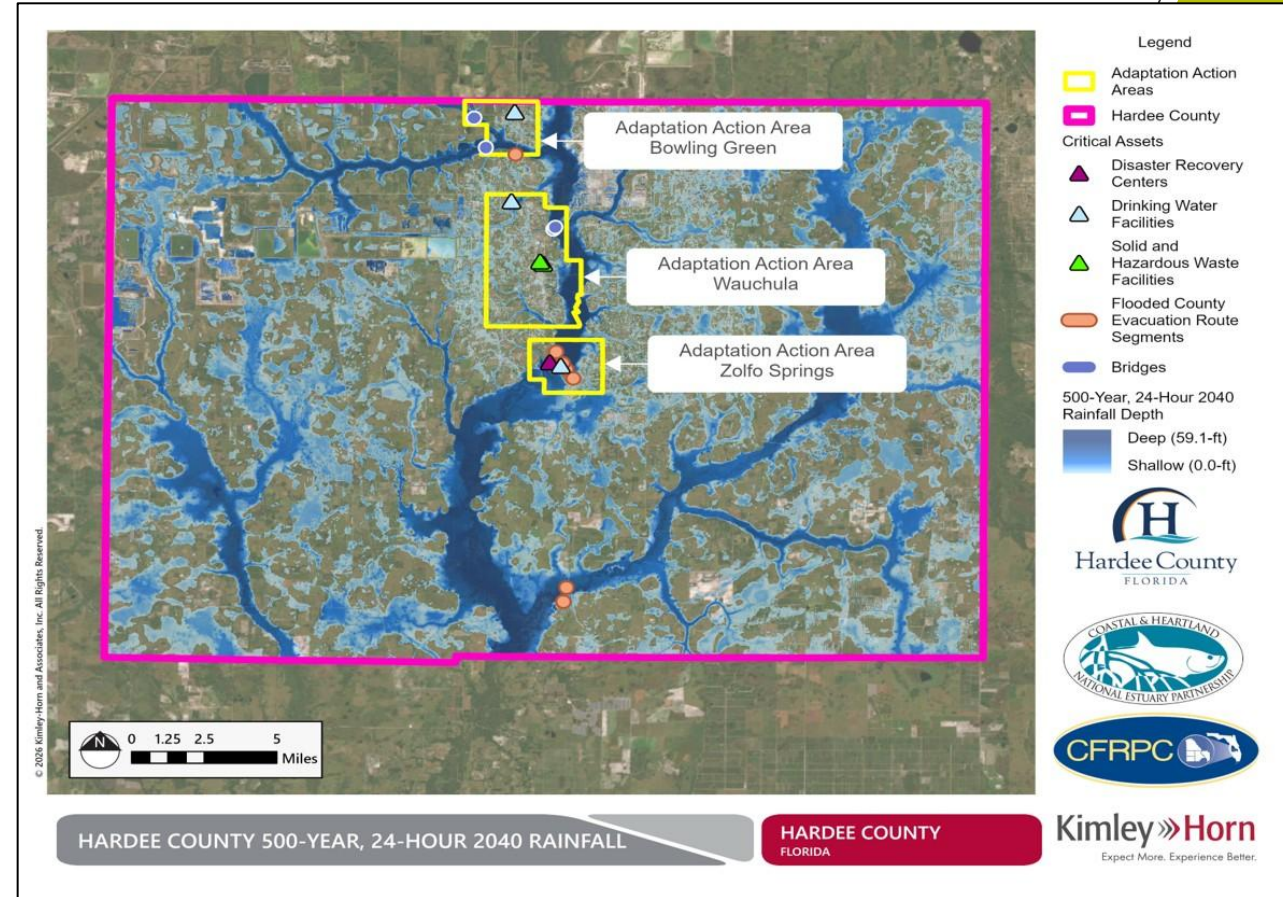
Adaptation Action Area Plan Overview

- Adaptation Action Area Plans provide a framework to respond to the findings of the Vulnerability Assessment



Adaptation Action Areas: Identification

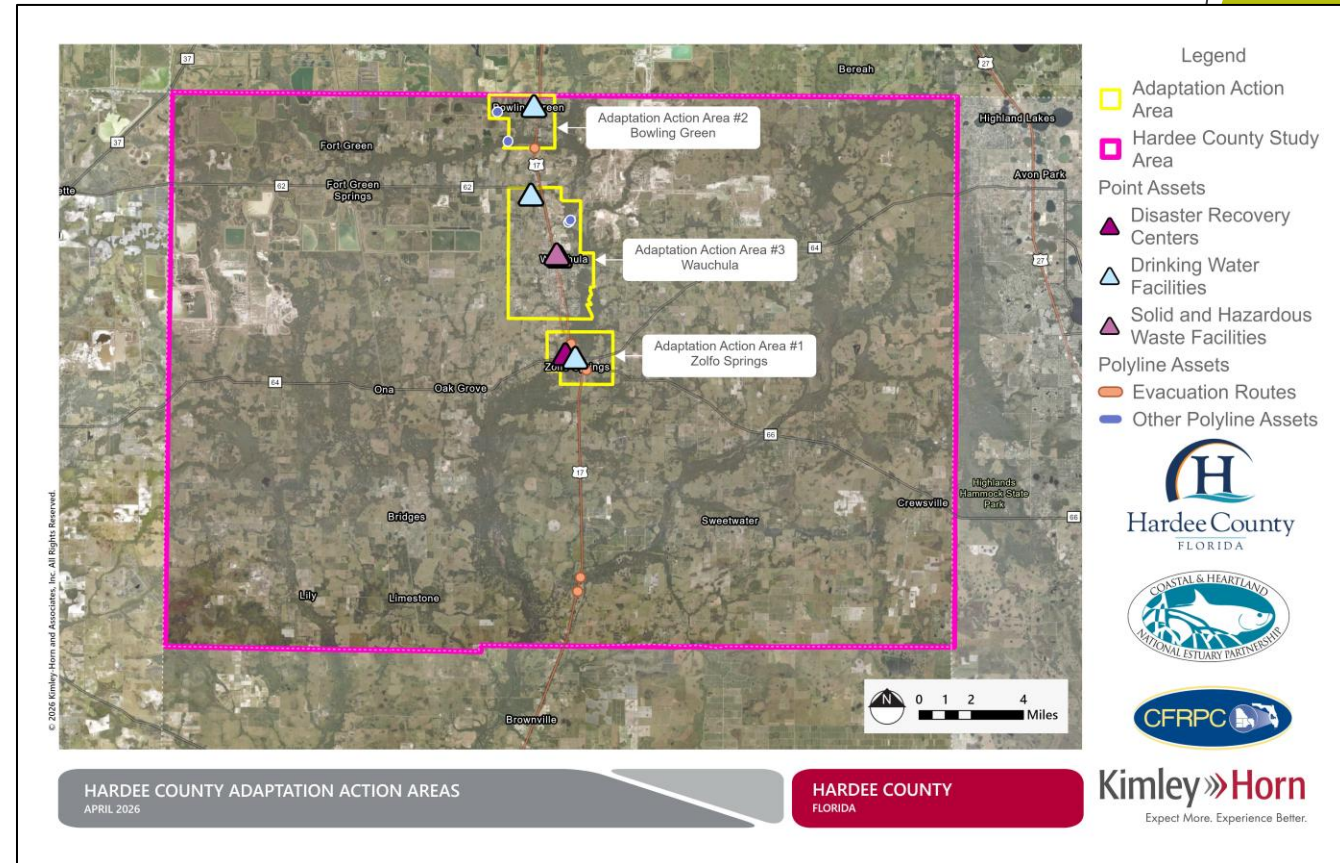
- Adaptation Action Areas (AAA) were defined to group critical assets for targeted Adaptation Plans
- AAAs were defined using:
 - Flood Extents
 - Critical Asset Distribution
 - Municipal and Parcel Boundaries
- The following AAAs were delineated:
 - Zolfo Springs
 - Bowling Green
 - Wauchula



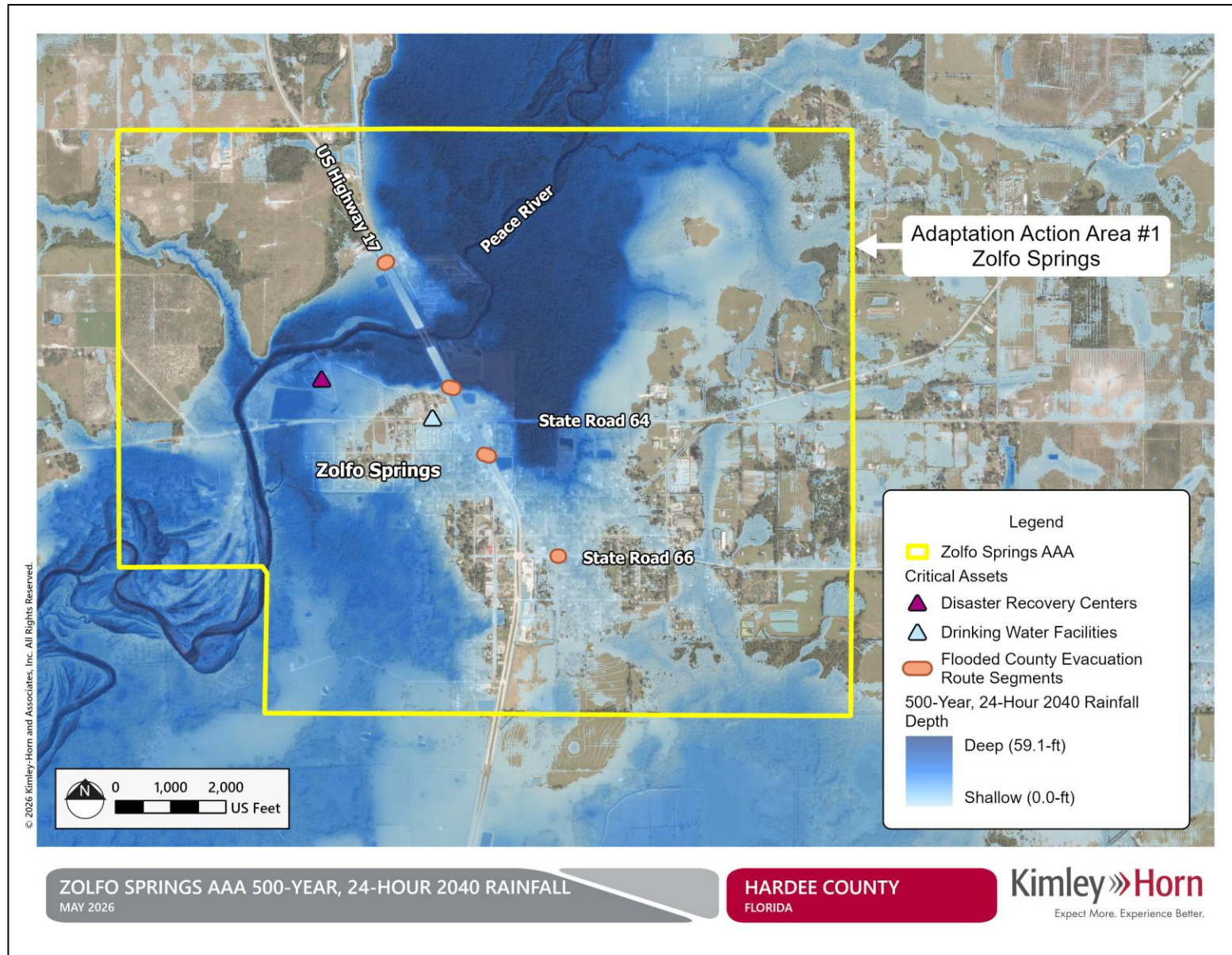
Adaptation Action Areas: Ranking

- A multi-criterion weighted matrix was developed to rank the AAAs
 - Used data from the Hardee County VA and public outreach comments.
- Weighted final scores were totaled to determine AAA rank

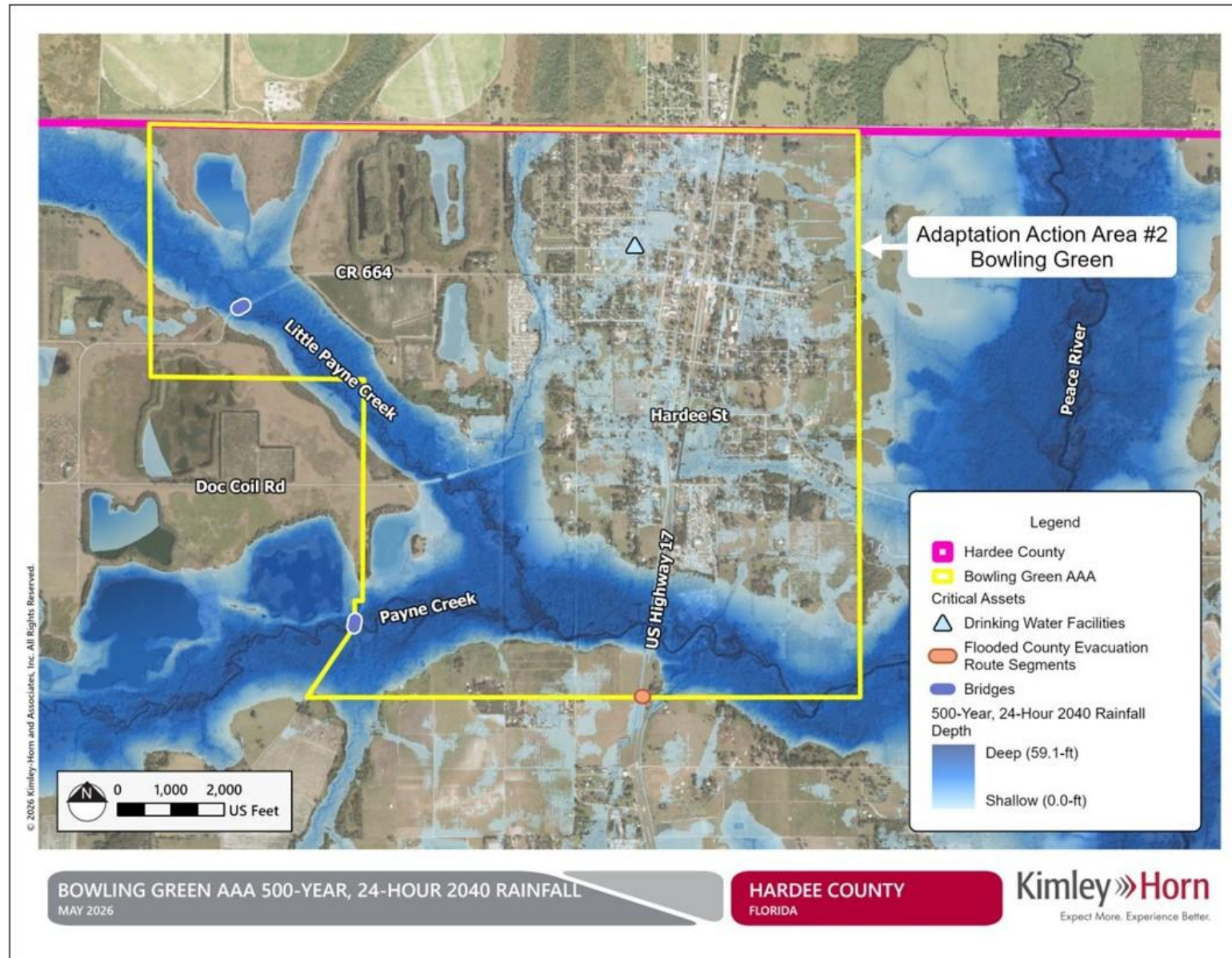
Criteria	Weight
Exposure Analysis (100-Year)	25%
Exposure Analysis (500-Year)	20%
Sensitivity Analysis	20%
Asset Ownership	10%
Asset Relevancy	5%
Asset Group	5%
Length of Inundated Evacuation Routes	5%
Length of Inundated Polylines	5%
Quantity of Public Comments	5%
Total	100%



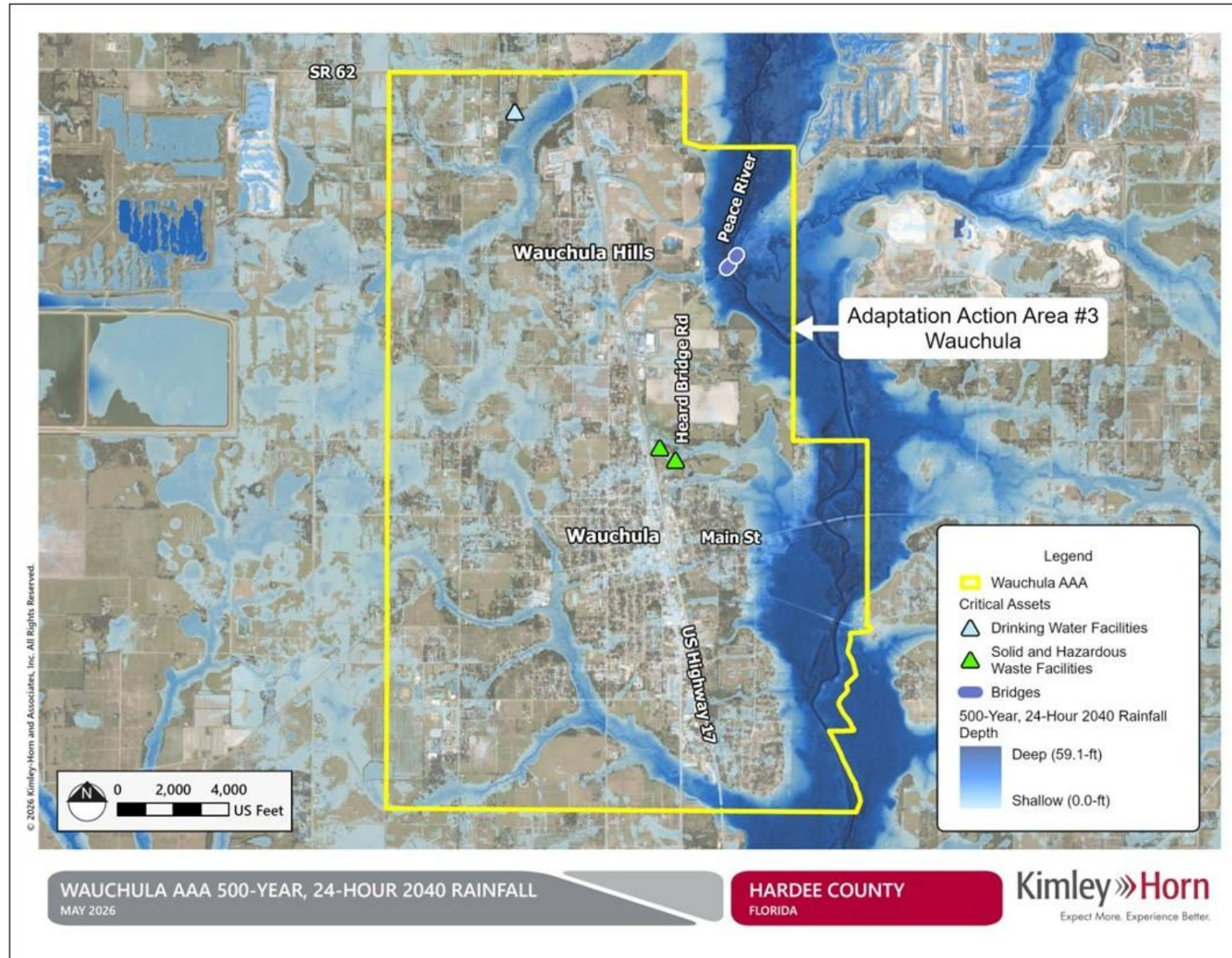
Adaptation Action Area #1 Zolfo Springs



Adaptation Action Area #2 Bowling Green

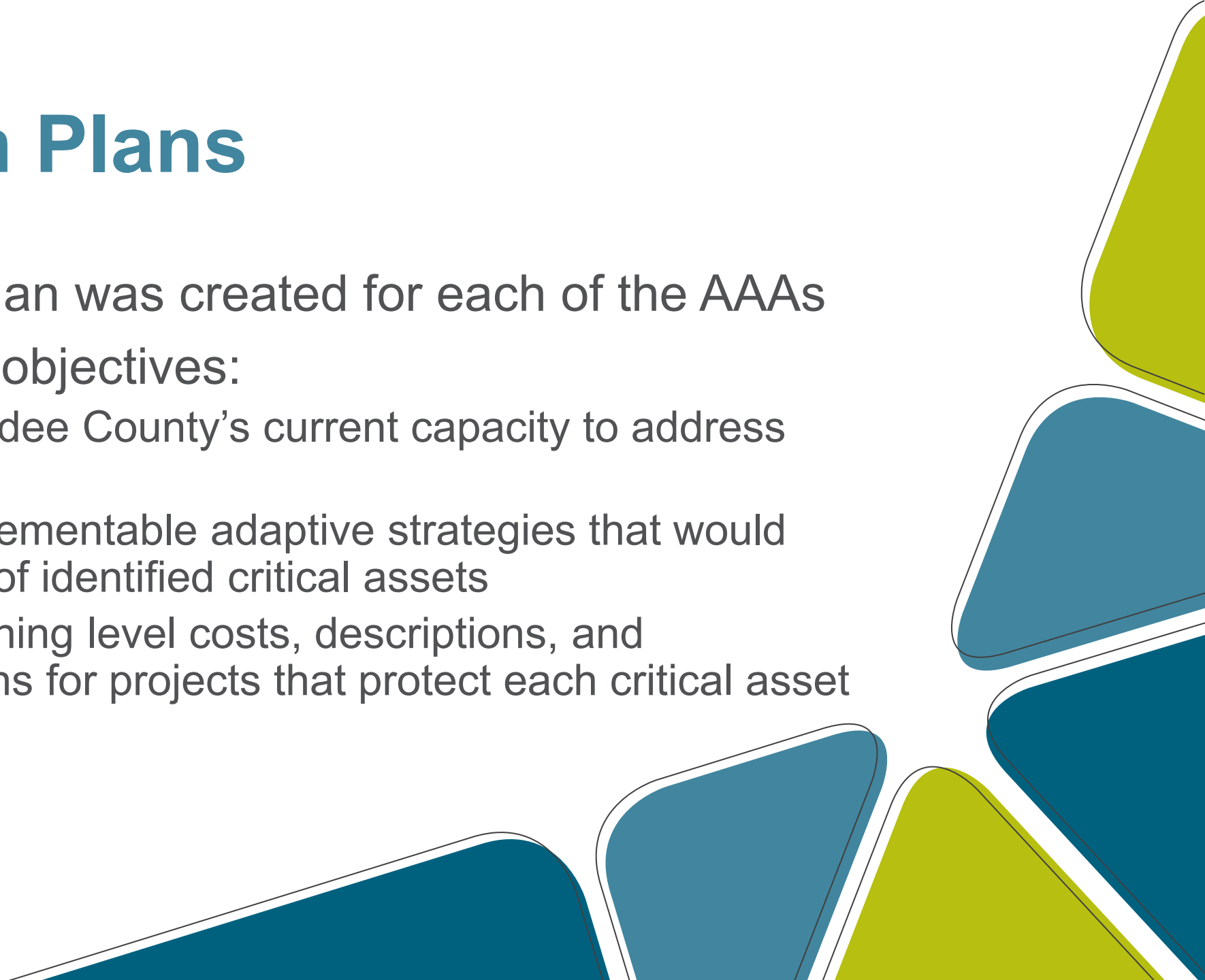


Adaptation Action Area #3 Wauchula



Adaptation Plans

- An Adaptation Plan was created for each of the AAAs
- Adaptation Plan objectives:
 - To Highlight Hardee County's current capacity to address flood resiliency
 - To propose implementable adaptive strategies that would reduce flood risk of identified critical assets
 - To develop planning level costs, descriptions, and conceptual designs for projects that protect each critical asset



Adaptive Strategies: Zolfo Springs

- Install Deployable Flood Barriers at the Nickerson Ullrich Building
 - Cost effective temporary solution to increase flood resiliency during and after major storm events



Adaptive Strategies: Bowling Green

- Elevate Hobb Rd Bridge Crossing Payne Creek
 - Improves emergency accessibility during and after major storm events



Adaptive Strategies: Wauchula

- Implement Low Impact Development Improvements at the Hardee County Fire Rescue and Health Department
 - Better utilizes open space
 - Improves stormwater quality and creates additional storage
 - Reduces stormwater runoff and localized flooding



WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

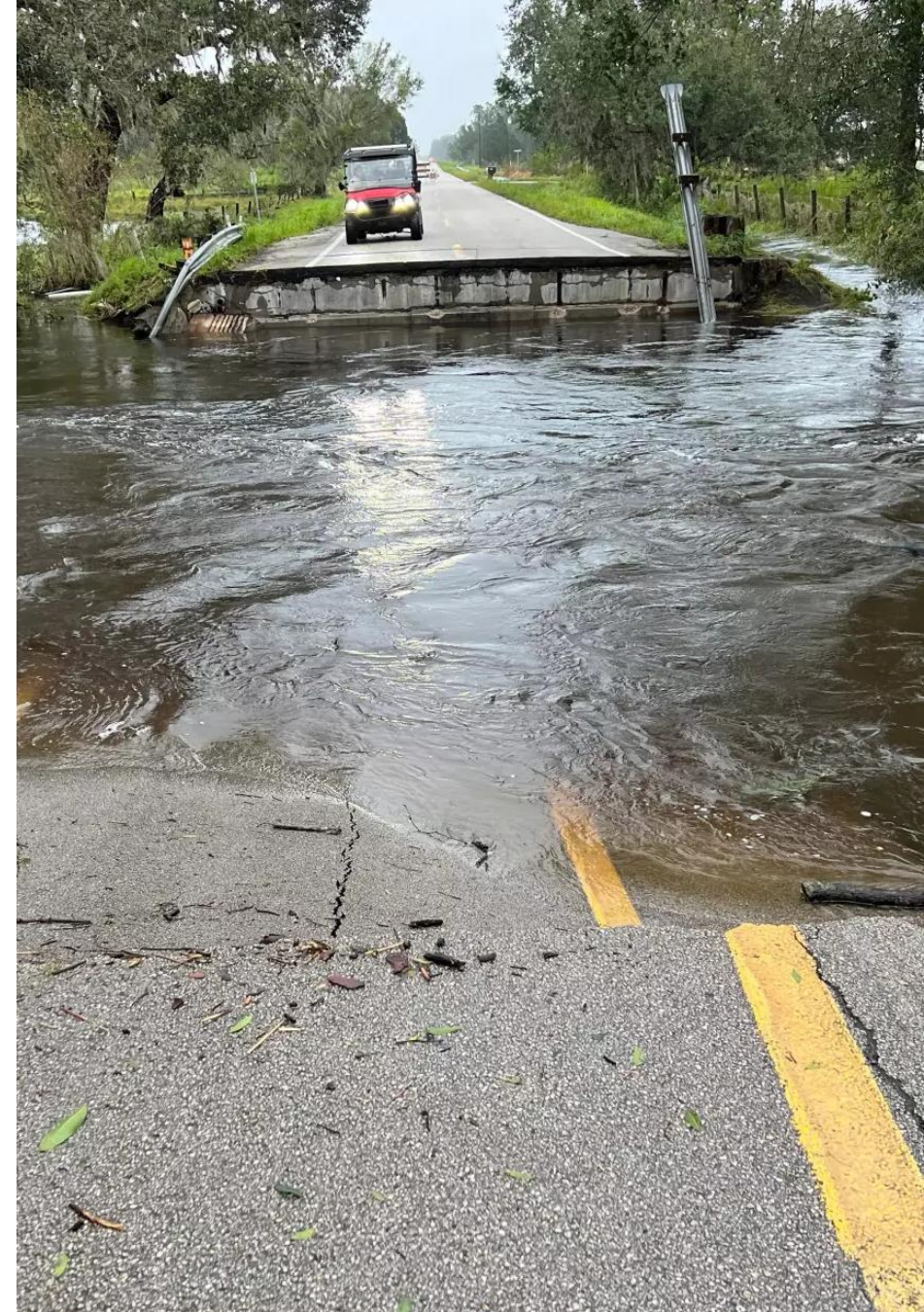
**Need to coordinate with counties,
municipalities and partners on
projects crossing jurisdictional
boundaries**

PURSUE IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS

i.e. Resilient Florida Grants

Implementation Projects:

Applications accepted
July 1 – September 1, 2026



Hollandtown Road – Hurricane Ian