

### Definitions for Classifications

#### Location (Geographic Area Affected)

- **Negligible:** Less than 10 percent of planning area or isolated single-point occurrences
- **Limited:** 10 to 25 percent of the planning area or limited single-point occurrences
- **Significant:** 25 to 75 percent of planning area or frequent single-point occurrences
- **Extensive:** 75 to 100 percent of planning area or consistent single-point occurrences

#### Maximum Probable Extent (Magnitude/Strength based on historic events or future probability)

- **Weak:** Limited classification on scientific scale, slow speed of onset or short duration of event, resulting in little to no damage
- **Moderate:** Moderate classification on scientific scale, moderate speed of onset or moderate duration of event, resulting in some damage and loss of services for days
- **Severe:** Severe classification on scientific scale, fast speed of onset or long duration of event, resulting in devastating damage and loss of services for weeks or months
- **Extreme:** Extreme classification on scientific scale, immediate onset or extended duration of event, resulting in catastrophic damage and uninhabitable conditions

Hazard	Scale / Index	Weak	Moderate	Severe	Extreme
Drought	Palmer Drought Severity Index <sup>3</sup>	-1.99 to +1.99	-2.00 to -2.99	-3.00 to -3.99	-4.00 and below
Earthquake	Modified Mercalli Scale <sup>4</sup>	I to IV	V to VII	VII	IX to XII
	Richter Magnitude <sup>5</sup>	2, 3	4, 5	6	7, 8
Hurricane Wind	Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale <sup>6</sup>	1	2	3	4, 5
Tornado	Fujita Tornado Damage Scale <sup>7</sup>	F0	F1, F2	F3	F4, F5

#### Probability of Future Events

- **Unlikely:** Less than 1 percent probability of occurrence in the next year or a recurrence interval of greater than every 100 years.
- **Occasional:** 1 to 10 percent probability of occurrence in the next year or a recurrence interval of 11 to 100 years.
- **Likely:** 10 to 90 percent probability of occurrence in the next year or a recurrence interval of 1 to 10 years
- **Highly Likely:** 90 to 100 percent probability of occurrence in the next year or a recurrence interval of less than 1 year.

#### Overall Significance

- **Low:** Two or more criteria fall in lower classifications or the event has a minimal impact on the planning area. This rating is sometimes used for hazards with a minimal or unknown record of occurrences or for hazards with minimal mitigation potential.
- **Medium:** The criteria fall mostly in the middle ranges of classifications and the event's impacts on the planning area are noticeable but not devastating. This rating is sometimes used for hazards with a high extent rating but very low probability rating.
- **High:** The criteria consistently fall in the high classifications and the event is likely/highly likely to occur with severe strength over a significant to extensive portion of the planning area.

3 Cumulative meteorological drought and wet conditions: <http://ncdc.noaa.gov/>

4 Earthquake intensity and effect on population and structures: <http://earthquake.usgs.gov>

5 Earthquake magnitude as a logarithmic scale, measured by a seismograph: <http://earthquake.usgs.gov>

6 Hurricane rating based on sustained wind speed: <http://nhc.noaa.gov>

7 Tornado rating based on wind speed and associated damage: <http://spc.noaa.gov>