



Patrick Morrisey
Governor of West Virginia

February 17, 2025

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Through: Lilian Hutchinson, Acting Regional Administrator
FEMA Region 3
One Independence Mall, Sixth Floor
615 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19106

RE: REQUEST FOR PRESIDENTIAL MAJOR DISASTER DECLARATION

Dear Mr. President:

I respectfully request, under the provisions of Section 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 5121-5207 (Stafford Act) and implemented by 44 CFR § 206.36, that you declare a Major Disaster Declaration for the State of West Virginia as a result of severe weather that began on February 15, 2025, and that remains ongoing.

I am requesting activation of the Individual Assistance (IA) Program and the Public Assistance (PA) Program for Boone, Cabell, Greenbrier, Kanawha, Lincoln, Logan, Mercer, McDowell, Mingo, Raleigh, Summers, Wayne, and Wyoming Counties as well as assistance from the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) statewide.

Weather

This past week, a strong jet stream helped amplify a low-pressure system that tapped into the rich Gulf moisture, creating a significant warm front that moved slowly over the State of West Virginia. This warm front accompanied a strong low-level jet that created rapidly developing rainfall that precipitated totals approaching amounts greater than the 25-year monthly average in

much of Southern West Virginia. Shortly after the warm sector of the storm system passed, a strong cold front made its way through the state delivering strong thunderstorms that triggered several Severe Thunderstorm Warnings, High Wind Warnings, and additional rainfall total that transitioned into accumulating snow.

The rainfall recorded from this system turned into runoff due to the heavy rain and flooding received the prior week. The continued inundation of rainfall from this incident was compounded and made worse due to the already saturated soil conditions in impacted areas. This resulted in significant flooding, creating hazardous and life-threatening conditions for those impacted.

Situation

Due to the developing weather patterns this past week, which suggested a significant winter storm event followed by dangerous wind chills and other adverse weather, I issued a State of Preparedness for all 55 counties in West Virginia beginning on Wednesday, February 5th, 2025. On Saturday, February 15th, 2025, I declared a State of Emergency amid heavy rains and flooding in Cabell, Greenbrier, Kanawha, Logan, Mercer, McDowell, Mingo, Raleigh, Summers, and Wyoming Counties, urging all West Virginians to be vigilant and use caution as other parts of the state are affected by adverse weather. On Sunday, February 16th, 2025, I added Boone, Lincoln, and Wayne Counties to my State of Emergency Declaration.

In addition to declaring the State of Emergency, I directed the West Virginia Emergency Management Division (WVEMD) to activate the West Virginia State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) on Saturday, February 15th, 2025, to coordinate and respond to the flooding and subsequent hazardous conditions. I have also instructed our West Virginia National Guard (WVNG) to support resource requests submitted by County Emergency Managers (EM) in the affected areas. The West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDOH) is currently engaged in Emergency Protective Measures (EPM) and coordinating debris removal operations on impacted roadways to quickly return them to a safe and passable condition. In addition, 38 swift water rescues have been performed by first responders in the affected counties to assist residents trapped in their homes and motorists trapped in their vehicles. Unfortunately, there has been one confirmed death so far, and several individuals have been reported missing.

The widespread flooding, mudslides, and debris have caused many of the impacted areas to remain inaccessible for assessment and assistance. In addition, widespread utility outages including water, wastewater, electricity, and communications have occurred across all impacted counties. At present, over 21,000 customers remain without electricity which is a situation that can become deadly due to the dropping temperatures in the impacted areas that are expected to reach the low teens or single digits in the coming days.

Numerous voluntary partners have assisted and continue to aid affected West Virginians. The depth and breadth of assistance is still unfolding as conditions change. Currently, Facing Hunger is providing trailers of food and water; God's Pit Crew is providing clean up supplies; The American Red Cross has provided meals and is supporting several shelters; and The Salvation Army is providing meals and spiritual care. These services and goods are being provided to citizens

through several community distribution centers across the impacted counties. In addition, four (4) canine teams along with six (6) support members are conducting search and rescue or recover missions in the affected areas.

Summary

The severe weather event that devastated counties outlined in this request necessitates the need for supplementary federal assistance. Therefore, pursuant to 44 CFR §206.36, I find that this incident is of such severity and magnitude that effective response and recovery is beyond the capabilities of state and local governments. Supplementary federal assistance is requested to ensure the protection of life, property, public health, and safety, and to avert the threat of further disaster. Also, pursuant to 44 CFR §206.40 (c), I reserve the right to request additional counties and programs for this disaster declaration request once a determination has been made.

For additional information or questions pertaining to this request, please contact G.E. McCabe, Director of the WVEMD, at 304-558-5380 or GE.McCabe@wv.gov. He is authorized to provide any further information, assurances, requests, or justifications on my behalf.

Sincerely,



Patrick Morrisey
Governor

Appendix: Email WVPA@wv.gov for access to the share folder of supporting documentation.

- A: OMB No. 1660-0009/FEMA Form 010-0-13
- B: Congressional Letter of Support (will be sent separately)
- C: IA / PA Program Joint Validation Summaries (will be completed with FEMA at a later date)
- D: Weather Report for Incident Period
- E: Emergency Proclamations (placed in online share folder – please contact WVPA@wv.gov for access)