

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
STATE OF MONTANA

BRIAN SCHWEITZER  
GOVERNOR



JOHN BOHLINGER  
LT. GOVERNOR

June 9, 2011

The Honorable Barack Obama  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Through:

Robin Finegan, Regional Administrator  
Federal Emergency Management Agency  
Region VIII  
Department of Homeland Security  
Denver Federal Center, Building 710  
P.O. Box 25267  
Denver, CO 80225-0267

Dear Mr. President:

This letter provides supplemental information for my initial letter dated June 1, 2011. 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, I request that you declare a major disaster for the State of Montana as a result of severe spring flooding throughout the state of Montana. I am specifically requesting public assistance be made available for the following counties: Big Horn, Blaine, Broadwater, Carbon, Carter, Cascade, Chouteau, Custer, Dawson, Fallon, Fergus, Garfield, Golden Valley, Hill, Judith Basin, McCone, Meagher, Musselshell, Petroleum, Phillips, Powder River, Prairie, Roosevelt, Rosebud, Stillwater, Sweet Grass, Treasure, Valley, Wheatland, Wibaux, and Yellowstone as well as the entire lands of the Crow, Fort Belknap, Northern Cheyenne and Rocky Boys Indian Reservations. As further explained below, I request the incident period begin April 4, 2011 and be continuing.

This time period coincides with my Executive Order Proclaiming an Emergency to exist in Valley County dated April 4, 2011, and with the first occurrence of spring flooding and expenditures for emergency protective measures. I further request that the HMGP program be implemented statewide. I have not determined that DFA is required at this time. I requested a FEMA Preliminary Damage Assessment team on May 26<sup>th</sup> to evaluate damages that were occurring within the state.

On May 19, 2011, I issued an Executive Order for the entire state of Montana for severe flooding caused by widespread record rainfall across the central and eastern areas of the state in addition to the potential of severe flooding in other parts of the state due to rapid melting from record snowpack in the higher elevations of all of the river basins in the state.

The counties impacted by this continual flooding are: Big Horn, Blaine, Broadwater, Carbon, Carter, Cascade, Chouteau, Custer, Dawson, Fallon, Fergus, Garfield, Golden Valley, Hill, Judith Basin, McCone, Meagher, Musselshell, Petroleum, Phillips, Powder River, Prairie, Roosevelt, Rosebud, Stillwater, Sweet Grass, Treasure, Valley, Wheatland, Wibaux, and Yellowstone as well as the entire lands of the Crow, Fort Belknap, Northern Cheyenne and Rocky Boys Indian Reservations.

On June 6, 2011, I issued an executive order proclaiming a statewide Disaster to exist in Montana due to the overwhelming severity of the continual flooding across the state.

Conditions contributing to major flooding which damaged homes, personal property and public infrastructure include: saturated soil conditions; record snowfall, record high water equivalent in the winter snowpack; lack of available surface storage; log and debris jams along rivers and tributaries; and torrential rainfall. Record snowpack and snow water equivalent has continued to grow in higher elevations due to these heavy rains which will exacerbate the widespread flooding as seasonal warming continues. The months of May and June normally contribute approximately half of the annual precipitation for the state water year.

This year has already provided record inflows resulting from heavy snowmelt and record precipitation which have caused levels at four river gauge locations on the Musselshell River to shatter previous records and the Fort Peck Dam on the Missouri River to exceed previously established records for outflow volume. Overland flooding is contributing to high riverine water levels in areas of the state that have not experienced problems in the past decade. Riverine flooding is still ongoing in the Milk, Yellowstone, Missouri, Smith, Judith, Musselshell, Clark Fork, Flathead, Kootenai and Bitterroot River Basins. Extensive overland and riverine flooding has caused damage to hundreds of homes and hundreds of sites on county and township roadways throughout the state, many serving as sole access to homes. County officials estimate record damage to county roads and bridges in 2011. Other roads awaiting repair have sustained further damages due to lack of available contractors, and flood and weather related time constraints for contractors. Counties and Tribes have quickly depleted their limited budgets on repair of flood-damaged sites, leaving no money for road maintenance.

In response to the situation, I have taken appropriate action under State law and issued an Executive Order proclaim a flood emergency declaration Valley County on April 4, 2011 directing execution of the State Emergency Operations Plan (SEOP) in accordance with Section 401 of the Stafford Act.

Subsequently, on May 19, 2011, I issued a statewide emergency declaration due to record rainfall across the eastern half of the state as well as warnings from federal agencies of the record snowpack and snow water equivalent remaining at higher elevations.

Again on June 6, I issued an executive order of a statewide Disaster to exist due to the overwhelming severity of the continual flooding across the state. The declarations activated state resources to support local and tribal governments.

Additionally, the state upholds its responsibility to ensure effective mitigation measures are implemented to deter damages. In compliance with Federal requirements, the State of

Montana has ensured its Standard Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan received approval from FEMA, which occurred on November 4, 2010 and will expire November 4, 2013. The State maintains compliance with 44 CFR, the Federal Unified Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) Guidance, and state administration and strategic plans in support of disaster recovery. The Montana Department of Military Affairs, Disaster and Emergency Services Division (MTDES) conducts extensive outreach for mitigation throughout the state. The agency has also been training emergency managers on Public Assistance (PA), Individual Assistance (IA), and HMA guidance, and working with individual communities that experience severe flood issues.

In response to reports by local and tribal governments regarding widespread damages, on May 27, 2011, I requested FEMA coordinate with the Montana Department of Military Affairs, Disaster and Emergency Services Division, to conduct a joint Federal, State, and local survey of the damaged areas. The Public Assistance Preliminary Damage Assessment (PDA) took place June 1 through June 8, 2011, after river levels temporarily crested in the majority of communities and floodwaters that had inundated infrastructure began to recede. Preliminary assessments indicated the most severe impacts were to public infrastructure, such as roads, bridges. Direct damages and losses also occurred to public and private property, and response expenditures were incurred for emergency protective measures and debris clearance.

Based on the findings of the PDA, I have determined and I certify that this incident is of such severity and magnitude that effective response and recovery is beyond the capabilities of the State and the affected local and tribal governments and that supplementary Federal assistance is necessary. I am specifically requesting the Public Assistance Program, Categories A through G, for the following counties: Big Horn, Blaine, Broadwater, Carbon, Carter, Cascade, Chouteau, Custer, Dawson, Fallon, Fergus, Garfield, Golden Valley, Hill, Judith Basin, McCone, Meagher, Musselshell, Petroleum, Phillips, Powder River, Prairie, Roosevelt, Rosebud, Stillwater, Sweet Grass, Treasure, Valley, Wheatland, Wibaux, and Yellowstone as well as the entire lands of the Crow, Fort Belknap, Northern Cheyenne and Rocky Boys Indian Reservations.

Additionally, I am requesting statewide implementation of the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program. Preliminary estimates of the types and amount of Public Assistance Categories A through G needed under the Stafford Act are tabulated in Enclosure A. Due to continuing flood conditions, I reserve the right to request additional jurisdictions be included as damages become more apparent. I also reserve the right to request implementation of the Individual Assistance Program at a later date.

### **Spring Flood Analysis from NWS**

The set up for Montana's spring flooding of 2011 began as early as April 2010. Up until April 2010, conditions had been dry and there was concern for water shortages during the summer of 2010. However, April brought a shift in this trend. Precipitation for the state as a whole came in above normal for April, and this trend continued through the summer months. Additionally, temperatures were averaging cooler than normal through the summer, so much of the precipitation that fell was not consumed by summer's heat. Water Year 2010 (October 2009 – September 2010) ended with virtually all of Montana receiving at least near normal precipitation. Portions of northwest Montana and most of Montana east of the Continental Divide received 115-150 percent of normal precipitation. Only small areas west of the divide

and in south central Montana ended the water year below normal. Montana thus entered Water Year 2011 with streams flows, reservoirs and soil moisture near to above normal. The winter storms of 2010-2011 continued the trend of above normal precipitation. During the same time, the warm Chinook winds, common along the Rocky Mountain Front and the adjacent plains, were weaker and of shorter duration than is typical. As a result, the snow from the storms accumulated during the winter across the plains as well as the mountains.

As Montana entered the early spring, every basin across the state had received above to well above average precipitation. Areas of northeast Montana, particularly north of the Milk River, had 80 to 100 inches of snow on the ground. Snow water equivalent measurements for some areas on the plains approached 11 inches. The mountains of every river basin were reporting above to well above average snow water equivalent. Overall, temperatures remained cool with only sporadic, short-lived periods of warming.

With these preconditions in place, it was clear to many state and federal agency partners that a significant spring flood was possible. NWS staff from all four Montana offices, in concert with US Bureau of Reclamation, US Army Corps of Engineers, US Geological Survey and other agency partners, provided briefings to local, tribal, state and federal officials to advise state and local jurisdictions to prepare for substantial flooding.

In mid-March, gradually warmer temperatures started melting the snow and moving the river ice. With the aid of a few warm days, the plains snow north of the Milk River melted relatively quickly. Rivers reach major flood levels in several locations along the Milk River and some of its tributaries.

The lower Milk River reached record levels in mid-April as a result of snow-melt runoff.

- The Milk River at Juneberg Bridge, near Dodson reached a discharge of 10,200 cfs, the 5th highest of 32 years of record.
- The Milk River at Tampico reached a discharge of 19,700 cfs, the highest of 27 years of record.
- The Milk River at Nashua reached a discharge of 21,100 cfs, the 2nd highest of 71 years of record.

A series of strong spring storms brought significant precipitation to the Montana in May, with the most significant occurring during the week of May 22. Much of the southeastern third of the state received more than 300 percent of normal precipitation during the month, with large areas receiving more than 400 percent of normal.

A changeable period with areas of heavy precipitation highlighted May 8-11 as a strong spring storm dumped heavy precipitation across much of Montana. While this storm caused heavy snowfall over the higher western mountains, with up to 21 inches falling in the higher mountains around Butte, heavy rain fell across southeast Montana, with up to five inches south of Miles City. Runoff from this rainfall caused the Tongue River near Miles City to rise nearly 7 feet in one day. Many streams across southeast Montana flooded a result of this rainfall. Stream flows on the lower Musselshell River, Pumpkin Creek, lower Tongue River and lower Powder River reached near record levels. The following are significant flows from that rainfall event:

- The Musselshell River near Mosby (USGS station 06130500) reached a discharge of 24,400 cfs, the highest of 79 years of record.
- Pumpkin Creek near Miles City (USGS station 06308400) reached a discharge of 9,600 cfs, the highest of 20 years of record.
- The Tongue River at Miles City (USGS station 06308500) reached a discharge of 15,000 cfs, the highest of 69 years of record.
- The Powder River near Locate (USGS station 06326500) reached a discharge of 24,400 cfs, the 5th highest of 72 years of record.

A very wet pattern dominated the last part of May. A series of storm systems brought regular rounds of precipitation, sometimes heavy, to the state. From May 19-23, Wolf Mountain (Big Horn County) and Crystal Lake (Fergus) recorded nearly 11 inches of rain. The Zortman area received nearly nine inches of rain. In 24-hour period on the 20th and 21st, Zortman received nearly five inches of rain. The heavy rain that fell over eastern Montana caused most rivers to rise out of their banks. Widespread damage was reported to roads, bridges and other infrastructure. I-90 from near Billings into Wyoming was closed for a period over the weekend of May 21-23 due to flood waters. The communities of Lodge Grass and Roundup were cut-off from road transportation for a few days. On the 24th, Billings recorded over 3 inches of rain.

This set an all-time daily 24-hour precipitation record at Billings. Several locations in southeast and central Montana recorded their wettest May, as well as wettest of any month of record. The following are significant stream flows from that rainfall event:

- Flows exceeded 7,500 cfs (cubic feet per second) on the Judith River near mouth, near Winifred, the highest of 10 years of record. This washed out the river bank and stream gage.
- The Little Big Horn River near Hardin reached a discharge of 20,900 cfs, the 2nd highest of 57 years of record.
- The Bighorn River above Tullock Creek, near Bighorn reached a discharge of 34,600 cfs, the 2nd highest of 66 years of record.
- The Yellowstone River at Miles City reached a discharge of 85,000 cfs, the 2nd highest of 83 years of record.
- The Yellowstone River at Glendive reached a discharge of 130,000 cfs, the highest of 24 years of record.
- The Yellowstone River near Sidney reached a discharge of 114,000 cfs, the 7th highest of 97 years of record.

A rainfall event on snow of two to three inches occurred from May 23 through 24 in the upper Musselshell River basin. The following record flows occurred in the basin:

- Musselshell River near Martinsdale reached a discharge of 4,580 cfs, the highest of 8 years of record.
- Musselshell River at Harlowton reached a discharge of 5,880 cfs, the 2nd highest of 64 years of record.
- Musselshell River above Mud Creek, near Shawmut reached a discharge of 8,900 cfs, the highest of 12 years of record.

- Musselshell River near Lavina reached a discharge of 11,600 cfs, the highest of 19 years of record.
- Musselshell River near Roundup reached a discharge of 14,800 cfs, the highest of 64 years of record.
- Musselshell River near Musselshell reached the highest of 66 years of record.

Some of the May precipitation records are as follows:

\* The 24-hour total of 3.12 inches at Billings on May 24 was the highest amount recorded in 24 hours on record. The previous record amount was 2.91 inches on June 8, 1997. Billings recorded their wettest May and month of record. The previous wettest month was May 1981 when 7.71 inches of rain fell.

Glasgow recorded their second highest monthly total precipitation. The highest recorded in any month was 10.29 inches in June 1923.

Miles City also recorded their second highest monthly precipitation amount. The highest recorded in any month was 9.78 inches in June 1944.

The monthly precipitation total at Zortman (16.44 inches) ranks as the greatest amount recorded at any one location in May. The old record was 12.63 inches at Red Lodge in 1989, and 15.90 inches at Noisy Basin SNOTEL in 1990. The most ever recorded in one month was 18.17 inches near Warrick in June 1906, and at Flattop Mountain, where they recorded 28.3 inches in December 1996.

## **Flood Impacts**

Forecasted overland and riverine flooding prompted communities throughout Montana to invest in extensive flood protection measures to maintain city, transportation, water, sewer, and electrical infrastructures; protect public and private property; and safeguard the lives of urban and rural residents. Although not all inclusive of every county for which declarations are being requested, several specific examples of the flood fight effort are listed below:

### Individual Losses

Continual flooding has taken its toll on the mental wellbeing of residents and responders across the state. Community resiliency has become increasingly fragile, and impacts on people are broader than experienced in prior disasters. Staff for the MT Department of Health and Human Services (DPHHS) reported anticipatory stress as individuals attempt to recover from a long event.

Damage costs associated with emergency work have been reported from every declared county. Damage costs associated with permanent work are predominantly Category B (emergency measures) and Category C (roads and bridges). However, there are also damages associated with buildings, equipment, utilities, and parks.

Carbon County received up to 10 inches of rain in areas of the county which caused flash flooding throughout the county with significant damages reported along Red Lodge Creek and Rock Creek as Cooney Reservoir filled and flowed through the spillway. This flooding

created major roadway and bridge damage as well as hundreds of flooded residences, mostly basements and isolation of several ranches and the state owned Blue Water Fish Hatchery. Sewage systems backed up into homes as well.

Carter County experienced similar record rainfall causing the Little Missouri River to flood across the southeastern portion of the county isolating ranches, damages roads and bridges and forcing evacuations. A rancher with a serious medical history was rescued from his ranch residence by a search and rescue team dispatched from Rapid City, SD. In other parts of the county, highways and county roads were closed due to flowing water and damages to both roadways and bridges.

On the Crow Indian Reservation, hundreds of tribal residents were forced to evacuate due to their homes flooding or from isolation due to roads being impassable. Medical and nursing home patients from the tribal hospital and nursing home were evacuated to Billings. Only the emergency room and tribal clinics remained open. At times, the majority of the reservation was without electrical power or telephone due to flooding and damage to the private utility infrastructure. The Villages of Wyola, Pryor, Lodge Grass and Fort Smith were isolated for extended periods of time without any outside access other than by helicopter. Shelters were opened on the reservation and eventually moved to Billings. Montana VOAD through our ESF 6 has provided and continues to provide food, shelter, water, diapers, baby formula and other services to the displaced people of the reservation.

Fergus County also received record rainfall over the area destroying several bridges and causing numerous washouts and sinkholes to county roadways throughout the county. Evacuations within the City of Lewistown were ordered due to the flooding of Spring Creek. Flood control dams upstream from Lewistown filled and continue to flow through emergency spillways. Highway 191 North of Lewistown remains closed with a 2 mile detour due to damage to a bridge. A shelter was set up in Lewistown. US highway 87/200 east of Lewistown was closed for several days due to a major landslide. MDOT cleared the debris and reopened this section of road.

Golden Valley experienced several rounds of heavy record rainfall and hail storms which have caused the Musselshell River to continue to flow at or above record stages. The county seat of Ryegate has experienced flooding and evacuations were ordered. There have been numerous reports by local officials of county road and bridge damage.

Judith Basin County has experienced historical flooding in the southern portions of the county including the Judith River drainage. This area has seen record shattering snowpack and snow water equivalent this past winter and spring which coupled with the unseasonably heavy rains, has caused roads to be completely washed out and bridges destroyed. An air rescue mission was order to remove an elderly person from an isolated area of the Little Belt Mountains for medical reasons. Several ranches have been flooded along the Judith River.

Musselshell County was impacted late May 2011 by the Musselshell River causing widespread flooding to the Town of Roundup and several subdivisions. The flooding has caused multiple sub divisions with several hundred homes total to be isolated from emergency services, supplies and potable water. The flooding caused substantial damage to the municipal water system in Roundup and required to state to assist with deploying potable water trucks as well as bottled water to take care of essential needs of the residents. In

addition, portable shower units and hand wash stations have been deployed to assist with their immediate needs while local officials attempt to repair the water system and allow it to resume to safe capacities.

Roosevelt County has experience not only heavy rain impacts, but also record releases from the Fort Peck Dam into the Missouri River. These high outflows from the dam have required the evacuation of at least 7 families along the river and threaten water treatment and sewage facilities in communities next to the Missouri. The county has requested USACE assistance with sandbags, pumps and emergency measures.

Stillwater County like others in south central Montana received heavy rain that caused the Stillwater River and its tributaries to flood destroying roads and bridges. Local volunteers filled and placed sandbags to lessen the damage to homes and infrastructure in the impacted areas. Additionally, subsequent storms have brought additional heavy rain and hail in excess of two inches to the county creating additional impacts and damages.

Sweet Grass County saw a flood related closure to I-90 west of Big Timber to the western county line with Park County. Heavy rain and snowmelt also created damages to multiple county road and bridge locations. The local emergency management office is posting notices and other public information on their website.

Wheatland County experience similar events of Golden Valley County with record rainfall in the headwaters of the Musselshell River. Local volunteers filled sandbags in Harlowton to protect infrastructure including the water and sewage systems as well as local residences. Livestock was stranded by the flooding creating rescue situations by the local volunteers. Evacuations were ordered and complied with by residents along the Musselshell River in the Harlowton area. At least one hundred homes were threatened during the rapid rise of flood water.

Indicative of areas of the state, dozens of families in Valley County could not access their homes because roads were flooded or washed out. Those that chose to stay to manage livestock, used boats to ferry their children to and from school bus stops daily as well as to transport supplies. Tens of thousands of acres were under water across the county as the Milk River rose to record levels caused by the rapid snowmelt of up to 800% of normal winter snowfall. Flood water from the snowmelt and precipitation has caused widespread basement flooding. Many of these homes are owned by elderly couples who live on a fixed income and cannot maintain pumps or remove furniture and carpet from their basements. They rely completely on their neighbors, as well as city and county officials, to assist them during these hard times.

### Infrastructure

As stated earlier, local officials estimate road damages rival those previously incurred. Many local officials have indicated the list of open roads was shorter to repeat than those that had been closed. Township, city, tribal and county flood damages include culverts, bridges, sink holes, landslides and road washouts, affecting everyday travel. Flooding has required closure of bridges critical to transportation, some of which will need to be inspected for flood damage. Rural residents have also been isolated from traffic access and emergency response. Resources for fixing road infrastructure are very limited because of continued flooding and

contractors are stretched too thin. Continual flood related emergency measures have resulted in a shortage of materials for road repair. Access to gravel pits is limited because of saturated roads. Counties and Tribes quickly deplete their limited budgets on repair of flood-damaged sites, leaving no money for road maintenance.

The State Emergency Coordination Center (SECC) has received and continues to receive reports from jurisdictions throughout the state of widespread infrastructure damage.

## **Mitigation Initiatives**

Response to decades of flooding has required a collaborative effort by local, tribal, state, federal and voluntary agencies to mitigate impacts to people, businesses, the economy and the state's infrastructure. The Montana Department of Military Affairs, Disaster and Emergency Services Division supplies in depth training for mitigation application development, benefit cost analysis (BCA), multi-hazard mitigation planning, and specific BCA training for the Rural Electric Cooperatives in connection with incidents like flooding and winter storms.

## **Local/Tribal/State Preparedness and Response Efforts**

### Preparedness

The current and projected costs of flooding have required a collaborative effort by local, tribal, state, and federal agencies to prepare for, respond to, and mitigate damages of this wide scale disaster. Flood preparedness efforts began in earnest in the winter of 2010 based on early predictions for a major spring flood by the National Weather Service (NWS) and U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). Local jurisdictions reviewed and updated their flood plans to fill any gaps identified in past disasters, held preparedness meetings with local citizens, and conducted resource inventories before the majority of river rises even began. Communities staged large scale sandbagging operations with local residents volunteering their time to help fill and sandbag infrastructure, homes or buildings. Local jurisdictions also requested USACE Technical and Direct Assistance to construct temporary levees. Early efforts were essential to ensure a successful flood fight. The USACE Omaha District of the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) provided Technical Assistance and Direct Assistance to 6 counties, 1 Tribe and 14 cities before and during the flood fight and continue to support the state, counties, cities and tribes. In anticipation of continued disastrous flooding in Montana and the region, FEMA has staged commodities in Rapid City, SD in the event subsequent flooding requires additional mass care assistance for the state

### Response

The SECC was activated to a Level IV on April 4 and elevated to Level III, on May 24 with operations continuing. Currently the SECC, which includes ESF 1 (Montana Department of Transportation – MDOT), ESF 6 and ESF 8 (DPHHS), ESF 5, 7 and 14 (MTDES) Civil Air Patrol (CAP), MT National Guard (MTNG), Emergency Preparedness Liaison Officer (EPLO), NWS, and FEMA. Contracted private aircraft have provided evacuation and other rescue operations on the Crow Reservation as well as several counties in central Montana. Additionally, this aircraft and crew also provided humanitarian aid by delivery of supplies to stranded residents in several locations. Civil Air Patrol has been used and will continue to be utilized to assist with documentation of riverine and storage facility flooding, critical infrastructure impacts, and identification of isolated rural residents. MTDES has deployed the

state radio cache of handheld radios to Musselshell County to support the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) Type 3 County Assist Team (CAT) with interoperable communication between assisting agencies. In addition, a DNRC Type 2 helicopter with crew has been assigned to support the CAT for rescue, medevac and emergency measure assistance to the county. The Montana National Guard was assigned missions to the Crow Reservation and Musselshell County to provide security and man road blocks in and around impacted areas of the jurisdictions. In addition, MTNG soldiers provided humanitarian services with their heavy transportation equipment to ferry supplies into isolated areas of Musselshell County.

Local jurisdiction and tribal EOCs were activated and remain open to manage response and recovery activities.

In cooperation with the US Army Corps of Engineers, thousands of sandbags have been deployed to local and tribal jurisdictions for flood preparedness and emergency flood operations. The Fort Peck project has contributed in excess of 200,000 bags and the Libby Project has contributed nearly 500,000 sandbags to date for this statewide flood event.

The MTNG began flood response planning in December 2010. These plans were completed in time for Governor Schweitzer's issuance of a flood emergency declaration for Valley County on April 4<sup>th</sup>.

The MTNG began flood response operations on May 27, 2011, and finalized those missions on June 3, 2011. Two MTNG units have been activated to support specific areas of the state. Support missions included traffic control points (TCPs) and humanitarian assistance. No Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) or Title 10 (Federal) military assets have been resourced for this year's flood operation. As of June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 93 Guardsmen served with approximately 700 man-days worked in support of Montana citizens.

The Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) activated its Department Operations center (DOC) on May 22, 2011, to monitor flood activity and potential flood activity across the state. The Montana Emergency Response Framework (MERF) designates DPHHS as the primary lead for Emergency Support Functions (ESF) 6 and 8. DPHHS has been working closely with representatives of the American Red Cross (ARC) and the Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) to address needs such as sheltering, feeding and other health needs. At the current time, the DPHHS DOC is operating ten to twelve hours, six days a week, providing an operations center for ARC, VOAD and FEMA representatives.

As of June 3, 2011, 42 of the state's 56 counties and all seven tribal jurisdictions have declared a state of emergency in preparation for rising water levels from heavy rains, dam releases and snow melt. To date, areas impacted the most by flood waters include the Crow Reservation, Ft. Belknap Reservation, and the City of Roundup in Central Montana. Other areas have experienced less severe events requiring no direct support of DPHHS, the American Red Cross or other agencies.

Crow Reservation has experienced the greatest impact- resulting in the loss of water and sewer systems and the evacuation and sheltering of approximately 300 people. During the

initial stages of the flood, Interstate 90 was closed for approximately 70 miles from May 22nd to May 26th. Many secondary roads and bridges were damaged and closed limiting access to many of the affected areas. In addition, the Crow Indian Hospital operated by the U.S. Public Health Service and a long-term care center operated by the tribe have been closed. Patients and residents were evacuated to Billings, 60 miles away. As damage assessments are being conducted and residents are returning home, approximately 50 individuals are still sheltered and the hospital and long-term care center are still closed. The community water supply is under a boil order and sewage systems supporting several major facilities, including the hospital, are inoperable. In its role as primary agency for ESF6, DPHHS has coordinated with the ARC and VOAD. Resource requests for Crow agency have included: sheltering/feeding for 300 individuals; a separate feeding request for another 300 individuals throughout the reservation unable to leave their area due to road damage; and miscellaneous items such as formula, diapers, and other care items. Unfortunately, the area expects impact from additional rainfall and snow melt over the next three to four weeks that may flood the area again. DPHHS anticipates continuing to operate the DOC to monitor and respond as necessary to the needs of the Crow Tribe.

Other areas requiring direct and indirect support of the DPHHS DOC include the Fort Belknap Reservation and the city of Roundup in central Montana. To date, requests have been minimal with a small number of individuals sheltered and fed by the American Red Cross and church operations. Like Crow, both areas are in the process of beginning recovery operations while anticipating additional flooding over the next three to four weeks.

As indicated above, 70 percent of the state, local and tribal jurisdictions have declared emergencies in response to, or anticipation of, flooding. In response, DPHHS has initiated several activities necessary to gather information for planning and response. All information is shared with partners, including the ARC, VOAD, Disaster and Emergency Services (DES) and local health agencies. Daily reports from jurisdictions that have declared an emergency update DPHHS about changes in status. Information about potential impacts on hospitals and long-term care centers, public water systems, and active and anticipated sheltering and feeding efforts are collected and assessed daily.

### **State Agency Coordination**

The following state agencies provided support to local and tribal response efforts throughout the State of Montana during the 2011 spring flood fight:

MT National Guard (MTNG) – The MTNG issued Operations Orders tasking Commands to respond to flood threats with personnel, liaison officers, and equipment to support local flood fight efforts beyond local capability. In collaboration with MTDES, the Joint Operations Center conducted planning meetings to develop the MTNG-to-local civil authorities flood fight relationships, gauge local preparedness efforts, assess potential needs, and follow-up with required equipment. Missions included security, humanitarian aid and high-wheeled transportation.

Department Military Affairs, Disaster and Emergency Services Division (MTDES), - MTDES monitored flood reports and have coordinated 76 local and tribal requests for assistance (RFA) to date. All requests for USACE Technical and Direct Assistance have been recorded

and processed through the SECC to provide additional flood support during the spring melt. The SECC continues to field questions related to Public Assistance (PA) and Individual Assistance (IA). Planners conducted extensive pre-planning and contingency planning.

Department of Health and Human Services (DPHHS) – DPHHS Food and Consumer Safety will continue to work with Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to monitor and maintain potable water systems throughout the state and address any water needs within throughout the operational period.

- Strategies
  - Coordinate with DEQ to track water and wastewater systems impacted by flooding including status (boil orders, do not use, advisory)
  - Coordinate the provision of bottled water as needed
  - Coordinate the repair, cleaning, and testing water systems as needed

DPHHS Public Information Officer will continue to provide flood risk communications to state and local partners regarding sheltering, flood safety, communicable disease prevention, clean-up, individual recovery, and mental health monitoring the DPHHS Website, Health Alert Network, press releases, and direct communication within 24 hours of an identified need, according to the risk communication plan.

Department of Transportation (MDOT) – Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) began addressing flood events and issues May 20, 2011. The flooding has caused extensive damage to many roadways, bridges, culverts and vegetation slopes. MDT responded to many locations where water affected the travelling public. There have been over 130 occasions affected that resulted in multiple short and long-term closures of the roadways as well as short and long-term closures of several bridges.

MDT submitted a Letter of Intent (LOI) to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) on June 1, 2011, seeking emergency relief (ER), and has initiated the process of evaluating damage and estimating repair costs to infrastructure including roadway, bridges, and other transportation-related assets.

Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) – The department has engaged specialists from Water Projects Bureau to monitor water storage facilities either owned or under permit by the department and to provide incident management assistance through their County Assist Team. The department has also remain heavily engaged with USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) snotel personnel and have briefed the Governor, key state staff and the public on current water year.

Montana Highway Patrol (MHP) – Staff mobilization was primarily directed at traffic control activities and monitoring road conditions consistent with the State Emergency Operations Plan for agency response to floods. MHP also assisted the BIA with traffic control points on the Crow Reservation.

### **Federal Agency Coordination**

The following federal agencies also provided support to local, tribal, and state response efforts during the spring 2011 flood:

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) – Officials provided assistance to the SECC with an Incident Management Assistance Team (IMAT) as well as their partnership conducting a joint state/federal preliminary damage assessment to all counties that have reported damage to date across the state. FEMA Region 8 has provided Geospatial Information System (GIS) assistance to the SECC. Federal agencies supporting the state's flood fight include the Flood impact maps for the Missouri River basin below Fort Peck Dam were assembled by the USACE – Omaha and shared with the SECC, local and tribal jurisdictions facing inundation effects of potential flooding due to record releases from the facility.

Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) – BIA personnel engaged with tribal leadership to form a unified command to the Crow Reservation flooding. BIA law enforcement operated and coordinated check point security at road closures and to protect evacuated property. BIA leadership work with tribal leadership on tribal specific issues related to the flooding.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) – Personnel provided Technical and Direct Assistance from the Omaha and Seattle Districts to help communities with advance measures and emergency operations flood fighting assistance including in excess of 900,000 sandbags from the Fort Peck and Libby projects. Assistance has been provided by the Omaha and Seattle Districts.

National Weather Service (NWS) – NWS Great Falls staffed the SECC and provided weather and hydrologic briefings at the state-federal flood operations briefings. While staffing the MT SECC, NWS Great Falls provided daily weather forecasts and summaries, offered decision support services related to the flood fight, and collaborated with federal, state and local partners to provide consistent, reliable information to the public. In addition, NWS staff from all four forecast offices within the state provided daily & weekly webinar / teleconference briefings for the all river basins from April 4th through April 23rd for over 150 local, state, and federal flood fight partners.

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) – Has the responsibility for tribal water and waste water systems. EPA personnel engaged with the affected reservations to restore water systems and conducted regular sampling to ensure the quality of drinking water.

USDA Natural Resources and Conservation Services (NRCS) – Has provided and continues to provide snotel snow and water equivalent data from across the state. This agency is partnered with DNRC, NWS, USGS, MTDES and other agencies to provide data used in predictive services on water runoff on all basins within the state.

In summary, I certify that for this major disaster, for the incident period of April 4, 2011 and continuing, the State and local governments will assume all applicable non-Federal share of costs required by the Stafford Act 93-288. I reserve the right to request additional direct federal assistance if required as well as statewide implementation of the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program. Total expenditures are expected to exceed \$8,601,039.00 in accordance with the table in Enclosure A. Enclosure B is my certification that expenditures and obligations will include the non-federal share of costs required by PL 93-288, as amended. Enclosure C contains a record precipitation table compiled by the National Weather Service.

In addition, I request assistance with debris removal, which poses an immediate threat to lives, public health, and safety. Pursuant to Sections 403 and 407 of the Stafford Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 5170b & 5173, the State agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the United States of America for any claims arising from the removal of debris or wreckage for this disaster. The State agrees that debris removal from public and private property will not occur until the landowner signs an unconditional authorization for the removal of debris.

I have designated Ed Tinsley as the State Coordinating Officer (SCO) for this request. He will work with the Federal Emergency Management Agency in damage assessments and may provide further information or justification on my behalf. Thank you for your expedited consideration of my request for a Presidential Disaster Declaration for the State of Montana.

Sincerely,



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BRIAN SCHWEITZER  
Governor

Enclosures:

Enclosure A: Montana Preliminary Damage Assessment

Enclosure B: Governor's Certification

Enclosure C: Record Precipitation Table - NWS

CC: Senator John Tester  
Senator Max Baucus  
Representative Denny Rehberg  
BG John Walsh, Director, Department of Military Affairs  
Ed Tinsley, MT Division of Disaster and Emergency Services