



STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA
DENNIS DAUGAARD, GOVERNOR

May 10, 2011

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, DC 20034

Through:
Robin Finegan
Regional Administrator
FEMA Region VIII
Denver Federal Center
P.O. Box 25267
Denver, CO 80225-0267

Dear Mr. President:

The State of South Dakota experienced a winter with above normal snowfall throughout the 2010/2011 winter season. In many areas of the state, snowfall totals ranged from 50 to nearly 100 inches of snowfall. The snow water equivalency in these areas was 6 to 9 inches. Additionally, the soil moisture content in the affected area leading up to this winter snowfall was 2 to 5 inches above normal, which did not allow the soil to absorb any moisture from the spring snowmelt. All of these conditions led to flooding when the temperatures warmed up and caused significant run-off. Fortunately, the state had nearly ideal melting conditions. However, even with these ideal melting conditions, the state did sustain major damage to public infrastructure starting on March 11, 2011, and continuing. In March, April, and May 2011, various rivers and lakes in eastern South Dakota continue to set new record high levels.

As a result of the heavy run-off, flooding, and ponding water, state and local government infrastructure has sustained significant damage. Overland, lake, and riverine flooding has inundated public recreation areas, washed out roads and culverts, damaged bridges, and cut off access to homes. Ponding water alongside roads has caused road beds to become saturated and has caused road systems to become impassable. Of particular concern is the fact that in several locations, emergency traffic is unable to travel the impassable roads. School, mail delivery, and general commerce are also being affected. In northeastern South Dakota, some school buses have stopped traveling on roads to gather children for school because the roads are impassable due to inundation and saturated road beds. One community had very limited access because all three roads leading into the town were inundated with water. To remedy this situation, the county made temporary repairs to one road leading into the town to allow traffic to flow in a more normal manner. Before this temporary fix was made, community members were only able to access their community with all-terrain vehicles and four wheel drive vehicles.

In response to this spring flooding and in accordance with federal law, I have taken appropriate action under state law and directed the execution of the State Emergency Operations Plan on March 10, 2011. The South Dakota Office of Emergency Management coordinated the following state agency resources and actions to aid governments in response to the storm:

- Prior to the spring flooding, the Department of Public Safety worked alongside state and local officials to ensure we were prepared for the imminent flooding. Weekly state agency planning meetings were conducted to coordinate preparedness and response actions. I also held town hall meetings in eastern South Dakota to inform local officials and residents of the importance of being prepared for the flooding to protect their own personal property as well as public infrastructure. Local officials documented key areas within their county that could be impacted by floodwaters and took appropriate steps to protect infrastructure and homes. Without this planning effort, the impacts of the flood would have been much greater.
- The state pre-positioned such assets as sandbags, sand, high capacity water pumps, heavy equipment, boats, and shelter trailers to provide the most effective and efficient response in order to save lives and protect property in flood-impacted areas. Ultimately, the sandbags and high capacity water pumps were utilized for sandbagging of infrastructure in counties and the water pumps were utilized for pumping of water away from inundated roads to allow the roads to remain open and safe for the public to use.
- In advance of the flood, the state requested technical assistance and advanced measures from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. From this technical assistance, the Corps identified numerous areas along the Big Sioux which needed additional levee protection. Without this temporary levee construction and reinforcement within the City of Watertown and the Big Sioux Rural Water System, the floodwaters would have no doubt adversely affected these communities and users of the water system. Additionally, the Corps provided hesco barriers for sewer lift stations within the City of Waubay.
- The state worked with the National Weather Service to obtain daily briefings on predicted weather and snow melt progression to ensure an appropriate state response. These briefings detailed river flood stages and when the rivers were forecasted to crest.
- Department of Corrections inmates were utilized to assist local governments with sandbagging efforts to protect improved property.
- The Civil Air Patrol and numerous state aircraft were used on a daily basis to fly over the James River, Big Sioux River, and Vermillion River basins to spot ice and debris jams and other trouble spots so that an appropriate response could be made. This aerial intelligence provided critical ground-truth and situational awareness to decision-makers in the state emergency operations center.

On April 13, 2011, I requested from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) a joint federal, state, and local preliminary damage assessment of the impacted areas for public assistance damage. The preliminary damage assessment of public infrastructure for all 28 counties was conducted the week of May 2, 2011 through May 6, 2011. The assessment confirmed 28 counties suffered severe impacts to public infrastructure during the spring flood event.

Significant personnel and equipment on the state, county, and local levels have been dedicated to recovering from this flooding event. I have further determined that this spring flood is of such severity and magnitude that effective response is beyond the capabilities of the state and the affected local governments, and supplemental federal assistance is necessary.

Mr. President, 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 South Dakota as a result of this spring flood event. I am specifically requesting Public Assistance for the following counties: Aurora, Beadle, Brookings, Brown, Buffalo, Clark, Codington, Day, Edmunds, Faulk, Grant, Hamlin, Hand, Hughes, Hyde, Jackson, Jerauld, Kingsbury, Lake, Marshall, Miner, Moody, Perkins, Potter, Roberts, Sanborn, Spink, and Sully. In addition, I anticipate the need for 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.

On May 10, 2011, I issued an Executive Proclamation declaring a disaster in South Dakota. Preliminary estimates of the types and amount of assistance needed under the Stafford Act are detailed on Attachment A.

The state has responded to seven Presidential disaster declarations since March 2010. With response to seven declarations in the last year, it is extremely difficult for the state to recover from yet another disaster. State, county, and municipal budgets are very tight in the current economic state. The costs associated with this disaster, combined with the last seven declarations in the last year, will only make budgets worse if federal assistance is not provided.

I am also requesting the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program statewide. South Dakota has experienced great success in the past with mitigation. This incident presents us with another opportunity to mitigate future damages. The state is committed to mitigation projects which lessen the impacts of future disasters. This is evidenced by our approved standard Statewide Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan which prioritizes mitigation projects. The standard Statewide Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan was approved on April 19, 2011.

Total public assistance damages for the 28 counties are estimated to be at \$7,154,975, for a statewide per capita impact of \$9.48. The statewide per capita impact of \$9.48 is above the most recent statewide per capita impact indicator of \$1.30, effective October 1, 2010. Counties incurred damages ranging from \$7.01 per capita in Lake County to a devastating \$173.55 per capita in Clark County.

The estimated non-federal expenditures and obligations for the state and local governments are included in Attachment B. I certify for this major disaster, state and local governments, and private-non-profit organizations will assume the applicable non-federal share of costs required by the Stafford Act.

I have designated Kristi Turman as the State Coordinating Officer for this request. She will work with the Federal Emergency Management Agency to provide further information or justification on my behalf.

Again, Mr. President, I sincerely appreciate your consideration of my request and your willingness to assist South Dakota's citizens.

Sincerely,



Dennis Daugaard

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Enclosures

ATTACHMENT A
SOUTH DAKOTA PRELIMINARY DAMAGE ASSESSMENT

Conducted May 2, 2011 thru May 6, 2011

Estimates of Eligible Public Assistance Under the Stafford Act

COUNTY	2000 Population	Category A Debris Clearance	Category B Protective Measures	Category C Road Systems	Category D Water Control	Category E Buildings & Equipment	Category F Utility Systems	Category G Other	Total Estimated Damage	Dollars Per Capita
Aurora	3,058		\$3,449	\$123,976					\$127,425	\$41.67
Beadle	17,023			601,139			\$28,600		\$629,739	\$36.99
Brookings	28,220	6,292	\$2,963	195,921					\$205,176	\$7.27
Brown	35,460			617,952					\$617,952	\$17.43
Buffalo	2,032			48,680					\$48,680	\$23.96
Clark	4,143		\$39,339	679,669					\$719,008	\$173.55
Codington	25,897	22,500	\$179,000	229,665					\$431,165	\$16.65
Day	6,267		\$25,074	250,878					\$275,952	\$44.03
Edmunds	4,367		\$4,022	182,893					\$186,915	\$42.80
Faulk	2,640			180,716					\$180,716	\$68.45
Grant	7,847			87,583					\$87,583	\$11.16
Hamlin	5,540		\$15,667	169,037					\$184,704	\$33.34
Hand	3,741			444,708			\$13,500		\$458,208	\$122.48
Hughes	16,481		\$125,900	24,323			\$5,500		\$155,723	\$9.45
Hyde	1,671		\$2,851	44,275					\$47,126	\$28.20
Jackson	2,930			20,988					\$20,988	\$7.16
Jerauld	2,295			111,463					\$111,463	\$48.57
Kingsbury	5,815			328,245					\$328,245	\$56.45
Lake	11,276		\$4,655	74,389					\$79,044	\$7.01
Marshall	4,576		\$5,788	125,565					\$131,353	\$28.70
Miner	2,884			217,553					\$217,553	\$75.43
Moody	6,595		\$1,565	95,041				4,845	\$101,451	\$15.38
Perkins	3,363			51,541					\$51,541	\$15.33
Potter	2,693			73,423					\$73,423	\$27.26
Roberts	10,016			123,042					\$123,042	\$12.28
Sanborn	2,675			437,077					\$437,077	\$163.39
Spink	7,454			840,578					\$840,578	\$112.77
Sully	1,556		\$1,008	26,734					\$27,742	\$17.83
State Agencies			\$255,403						\$255,403	
STATE TOTALS	754,844	28,792	\$666,684	6,407,054	0	\$0	\$47,600	4,845	\$7,154,975	\$9.48

The population of South Dakota is 754,844 (2000 census).

ATTACHMENT B

Governor's Certification

I certify that for this current disaster, State and local government expenditures and obligations will include the non-Federal share of costs required by the Stafford Act. As stated in my basic letter, and based on information available at this time, tabulation of these estimated expenditures and obligations are as follows.

CATEGORY OF ASSISTANCE	AMOUNT	
	STATE	LOCAL
Individual Assistance:		
"Other Assistance" under the Individuals and Households Program	N/A	N/A
Other (specify)	N/A	N/A
Total:		
Public Assistance	10%	15%
Category A – Debris Removal	\$2,879	\$4,319
Category B – Emergency Protective Measures	\$66,668	\$100,003
Category C – Roads and Bridges	\$640,705	\$961,058
Category D – Water Control Facilities	\$0	\$0
Category E – Buildings and Equipment	\$0	\$0
Category F – Utilities	\$4,760	\$7,140
Category G – Other (Parks, Recreational Facilities, Etc.)	\$485	\$727
Total:		
Grand Total:	\$715,498	\$1,073,246