



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

March 19, 2017

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D. C.

Through: Dr. Ahsha Tribble
Acting Regional Administrator
FEMA Region IX
Oakland, California 94607-4052

Dear Mr. President:

California has experienced one of the heaviest precipitation years in its recent history, and the impacts of storms that occurred in January and February have been extremely destructive to the State. Thank you for the federal assistance you have already provided. I am now requesting that you declare a Major Disaster for the State of California as a result of the atmospheric river storm systems that occurred February 1 through 23, 2017, 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 Title 44 of the Code of Federal Regulations § 206.36.

Following a destructive January, the February atmospheric river storm systems created conditions more perilous, causing cascading impacts throughout the State. These systems brought unprecedented precipitation, exceeding 80 daily precipitation records from February 1 through 11, 2017, and an additional 117 precipitation records from February 15 through 22, 2017. Both systems most significantly impacted the northern two-thirds of the State. While National Weather Service reports indicate there was minimal rain between February 12 and February 14, the widespread flooding of rivers, lakes, and tributaries could not recede before additional historic precipitation followed.

Despite this period of minimal rain, the widespread damage was constant and continuous. State and Federal water project operators (State's Dam and Reservoir System) were required to make aggressive water releases to stabilize capacity levels and protect the integrity of the water conveyance system throughout the State. (See the enclosed River Monitor Stations Above Flood Stage Maps for February 12-13, 2017). Several forecast points were above flood stage for most of the month of February, including Clear Lake, the Mokelumne River, the Sacramento River, the San Joaquin River, the Merced River, the Cosumnes River, the Tuolumne River, and the Yolo Bypass. (See the enclosed Federal Emergency Management System Incident Maps for February 12-14, 2017). Also during this time, mudslides damaged the Pfeiffer Bridge in Monterey County requiring its closure and isolating hundreds of people in the community of Big Sur. The bridge will remain closed for several months, requiring extensive State assistance including airlifting supplies into the area, staging medical helicopters, and transporting teachers into the area.

Also at this time, slope failure and levee breaches along the southern part of Tyler Island located on the Mokelumne River in Sacramento County impacted 44 homes and required the evacuation 115 residents. This also required two barge mounted cranes to place 100 tons of riprap in order to stop the flooding. On the same day, the Mokelumne River overtopped causing flooding to the Town of Wilton in Southern Sacramento County necessitating an additional 40 residents to evacuate. Further, there was a levee breach and debris basin failure in San Francisquito Creek in Santa Clara County causing six local reservoirs to spill over. Similarly, in San Benito County, there were three levee breaches along Pacheco Creek causing flooding in the northern part of the county.

By far, the most severe damage from the February storm systems occurred at the Lake Oroville Dam. Given the sheer volume of water, officials were required to significantly increase outflow releases in an attempt to decrease the lake's historic water levels. On February 7, 2017, the vast amounts of water flowing over the spillway caused the concrete spillway to deteriorate. To lessen the damage, water officials reduced the volume of outflow, and as a result, on February 11, 2017, water began flowing over the emergency spillway for the first time in the dam's history. Due to the tremendous volume of water, the ground adjacent to emergency spillway began to rapidly erode.

On February 12, 2017, fearing the emergency spillway would fail, officials were forced to evacuate nearly 200,000 Oroville residents. As a result, I proclaimed a State of Emergency and received your approval of an emergency declaration – FEMA 3381-EM-CA. Ultimately, twenty-three shelters were opened to accommodate more than 10,000 displaced residents.

The State endured continuous widespread damage throughout February. There was simply too much water flowing through our waterways to mitigate the significant impacts that followed. Levees continued overtopping and breaching, and river flooding occurred throughout the State. These storms also caused mud and rock debris flows, damaging roadways, and bridges. Heavy winds combined with the severe rainfall caused widespread power outages, leaving over 110,000 households and businesses without power. Additionally, eight storm-related fatalities occurred in seven counties during this period.

These storms also caused a train derailment and the closure of more than 50 interstate and state routes. Several communities became isolated, and required the deployment of swift water rescue teams and air medevac assets. There are literally hundreds of examples of damage to public infrastructure across the State as evidenced by the validated joint federal-state damage assessments totaling more than \$539 million. A few of these examples are:

- In Santa Clara County, outflows from Anderson Reservoir caused the Coyote Canal to fail, resulting in flooding on Highways 101 and 17, necessitating multiple road closures. There were more than 346 water rescues and over 50,000 residents were forced to evacuate.
- In Contra Costa County, failure of a water main cut off water supply to more than 1,000 residents and a major oil refinery. Residents continue to be provided bottled water.

- In Alameda County, collapse of an 80' by 30' retaining wall destroyed a culvert resulting in the closure of roads and affecting ingress and egress of local residents and emergency vehicles for an extended period.
- In Amador County, embankment erosion caused road collapse cutting off access to their wastewater treatment plant.
- In Del Norte County, the Klamath River overtopped destroying 800 feet of roadway. Residents continue to only have access to their homes by traversing private property.
- In San Mateo County, a sewer main failure caused a significant sewage spill and required the construction of a \$1 million temporary bypass in order to protect the health and safety of the public.
- In Sierra County, multiple erosions, slip outs, culvert failures, and debris flows caused the closure of nineteen main roads countywide.

In addition to public infrastructure damages, my Office of Emergency Services has made a separate request to the United States Small Business Administration for Colusa, Lake, Lassen, Plumas, Santa Clara, and Santa Cruz. These communities suffered localized flooding causing damage to more than 200 homes and businesses. To date, 200 people remain displaced and in shelters, requiring support from the whole community. This includes assistance provided by the Red Cross, private non-profit organizations, community and faith-based services, and California Volunteers, the State's volunteer agency.

In response to these storm systems, 48 counties declared local emergencies and activated their Emergency Operations Centers. Additionally, the California Department of Water Resources Flood Operations Center, and the Governor's Office of Emergency Services' Coastal, Inland, and Southern Regional Operations Centers as well as the State Operations Center remained activated from the previous storms in January. During the

activation, the State Operations Center mission-tasked various agencies to provide resources and assistance to the affected areas. These agencies included the California Conservation Corps, California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, California Department of General Services, California Department of Public Health, California Department of Social Services, California Department of Transportation, California Department of Water Resources, California Emergency Medical Services Authority, California National Guard, and American Red Cross.

Beginning February 28, 2017, my Office of Emergency Services dispatched eight joint Federal, State, and local Preliminary Damage Assessment Teams to determine the extent of damage to public infrastructure. The rapid succession of record rainfall caused repetitive damages to much of the same areas of the State. The damages incurred in February are indistinguishable by storm system and as a result, the teams were unable to attribute the damage to a specific storm system. It is also important to note that every county's verified damages significantly exceeded their required per capita indicators. These assessments demonstrate that in addition to extensive emergency response costs, the most severe impacts were to public infrastructure, including roads, bridges, flood and water control structures, and other public facilities.

I took appropriate action under state law and directed the execution of the State Emergency Plan in accordance with Section 401 of the Stafford Act. On February 12, 2017, I proclaimed a state of emergency to exist within the counties of Butte, Sutter, and Yuba as a direct result of the Lake Oroville Dam incident. On March 7, 2017, and again today, I proclaimed states of emergency to exist in 47 other counties because of these storms.

California has suffered multiple disasters in the past year. Prior to these storms, five years of unprecedented drought, parched landscapes, and millions of dead trees increased California's vulnerability to large-scale wildfires, leading to thirteen Fire Management

Assistance Grants (FMAG), and severely impacting California's resources and our ability to recover from disaster activity.

I have determined these atmospheric river storm systems are of such severity and magnitude, it is beyond the capabilities of the State and affected local governments, and supplemental federal assistance is necessary. Based upon the joint preliminary damage assessments, I am specifically requesting Public Assistance and any other Stafford Act disaster assistance programs as appropriate for the counties of Alameda, Alpine, Amador, Butte, Calaveras, Colusa, Contra Costa, Del Norte, El Dorado, Glenn, Humboldt, Kings, Lake, Lassen, Marin, Mariposa, Merced, Modoc, Monterey, Napa, Nevada, Plumas, Sacramento, San Benito, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Solano, Sonoma, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tehama, Trinity, Tuolumne, Yolo, and Yuba and Hazard Mitigation statewide. California's Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan was approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and expires September 30, 2018.

Estimates of the types and amount of assistance needed under the Stafford Act are tabulated in the Enclosures, as well as estimated requirements for assistance from certain federal agencies under statutory authorities. Total Public Assistance expenditures are expected to exceed \$539 million.

I certify for this Major Disaster, the State and local governments will assume all applicable non-federal shared costs as required by the Stafford Act. I have designated the Director of my Office of Emergency Services, Mark Ghilarducci, as the State Coordinating Officer for this request. Mr. Ghilarducci will work with FEMA on my behalf.

Sincerely,


EDMUND G. BROWN JR.