



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

October 26, 2022

The President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Through: Robert J. Fenton, Jr.
Regional Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency Region IX
1111 Broadway, Suite 1200
Oakland, CA 94607-4052

Dear Mr. President,

Thank you for the federal resources you have authorized for the State of California and its impacted communities through the Fire Management Assistance Grant (FMAG) Program to support responses to the Mill, Fairview, and Mosquito Fires.

Under the provisions of Section 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. Sections 5121-5207 (Stafford Act), and Title 44 of the Code of Federal Regulations (44 CFR) Section 206.36, I respectfully request you declare a major disaster in the State of California as a result of the Heat Dome event that created weather and environmental conditions that significantly exacerbated the ignition and spread of wildfires across California, including the Mill, Mountain, Fairview, Mosquito, Fork, and Barnes Fires. These wildfires have devastated communities throughout California, including communities in Siskiyou, Riverside, El Dorado, Placer, Madera, and Modoc Counties. The severity and magnitude of the Heat Dome event and the resulting

six wildfires also supports authorizing all categories of Public Assistance and Individual Assistance programs.

California experienced a historic Heat Dome event, which created extremely dangerous conditions for the state, communities and individuals, which is highlighted in the enclosed 2022 Heat Dome presentation. According to the National Weather Service, during the period of August 29 through September 9, 2022, California experienced a singular “Heat Dome event when a large area of high pressure extended through a deep portion of the atmosphere, trapping immense heat over California and causing extended and unprecedented severe heat conditions throughout the state.” This event resulted in historic high electricity demand in California and western states, taxed the power grid, and required a monumental statewide effort to prevent rolling power outages. The Heat Dome created record high temperatures that exacerbated drought conditions and dry fuels, creating conditions that caused the explosive spread of the Mill, Mountain, Fairview, Mosquito, Fork, and Barnes Fires.

Catastrophic damage has occurred in the areas impacted by these six wildfires, including four tragic deaths and multiple critical injuries among evacuees unable to escape the rapidly expanding fires. A total of 183 homes were jointly verified by my Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as destroyed. Mandatory evacuation orders were issued to 55, 268 individuals, 481 individuals were in local shelters at their peak, and nearly 130, 000 acres have been burned. Impacted communities, such as the City of Weed in Siskiyou County, have been forever changed by the devastation caused by these wildfires.

The estimated FEMA-eligible Public Assistance costs for the six wildfires is \$187,033,575. Even with FMAG Program reimbursement for the Mill, Fairview, and Mosquito Fires, the eligible cost to state and local government, including the non-federal share, is \$104,701,776, which far exceeds the statewide indicator for California. In addition to FEMA-eligible Public Assistance costs, the state and localities will continue to incur substantial costs associated with survivor support and recovery.

Under the California Emergency Services Act and in accordance with 44 CFR Section 206.36(c)(1), on August 31, 2022, I proclaimed a State of Emergency statewide due to the Extreme Heat Event, and on September 2, 2022, I proclaimed a State of Emergency in Siskiyou County as a result of the Mill Fire. On September 8, 2022, I proclaimed a State of Emergency in Riverside County for the Fairview Fire, and in El Dorado and Placer Counties as a result of the

Mosquito Fire. On September 19, 2022, I proclaimed a State of Emergency as a result of the Mountain Fire in Siskiyou County, Fork Fire in Madera County, and Barnes Fire in Modoc County. With each State of Emergency I proclaimed, I took appropriate action under State law by, among other things, directing the execution of the State emergency plan and deploying available assets, including local and state mutual aid as well as mobilizing out-of-state resources. In response to the Heat Dome event and in accordance with 44 CFR Section 206.36(c)(3), the following state agencies provided assistance that includes, but is not limited to, fire suppression and response activities, sheltering, resource coordination, evacuation support, air quality monitoring, and support to the access and functional needs population: the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE), California Highway Patrol (CHP), California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES), California Department of Public Health (CDPH), California Department of Social Services (CDSS), Emergency Medical Services Authority (EMSA), California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA), California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), California Air Resources Board (CARB), California Department of Education (CDE), California Conservation Corps (CCC), California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR), California Department of General Services (DGS), and the California National Guard (CNG). All of the fire-impacted counties proclaimed local emergencies and activated their local Emergency Operations Centers.

California is responding to an unprecedented year of disaster events that included a Heat Dome and a Tropical Storm, that have severely depleted resources at the state and local level. Since the beginning of the year, I have had to redirect state resources and proclaim ten States of Emergency for events across California, including the Heat Dome event and numerous wildfires. Resources to support these response and recovery efforts are exhausted. In total, there have been 6,739 wildfire incidents in California since January 2022, destroying more than 365,895 acres, and causing 9 fatalities. The State Operations Center activated for the heat dome event on August 31, 2022, and has been drawing from the same scarce resources to support local communities already stretched beyond their capacity.

In addition to igniting wildfires across the state, the recent Heat Dome event taxed the power grid, nearly resulting in rolling blackouts throughout the state, and posing threats to the homeless, elderly, and other vulnerable populations. Concurrently, Tropical Storm Kay was imminently approaching the southern California border, triggering severe flooding and debris flows.

The communities most impacted by the unprecedented Heat Dome event are economically disadvantaged and socially vulnerable. The six counties affected face a total combined housing rebuild cost of \$130,767,048. According to the FEMA ESRI dataset for insurance coverage, \$52,379,566 of the total is uninsured. On average, the six counties are estimated to be underinsured by 39 percent. After accounting for the average home insurance coverage amount for each county, there is a total underinsured deficit of \$60,080,503 (approximately 46 percent of the total cost and about \$263,000 per home) that will not be covered by home insurance and left to homeowners to bear. The impacted communities, particularly within Madera, Siskiyou, and Riverside Counties, are home to significant vulnerable populations that require support to maximize recovery outcome.

Granting a Presidential Major Disaster Declaration will provide the state and impacted communities with the necessary federal assistance programs to carry out an effective and responsible response and recovery effort. Federal assistance will equip survivors with vital resources associated with housing rentals, lodging expenses, transportation, loss of income, replacement of food, smoke damaged property, funeral expenses, unexpected medical costs, and long-term mental health impacts that require crisis counseling services. Portions of the communities affected are isolated and lack resources to assist with recovery.

Although FEMA has provided FMAGs to respond to the Mill, Fairview, and Mosquito Fires, these declarations are limited to the mitigation, management, and control of these fires. The resources devoted to fighting current wildfires are immense and represent only a fraction of the resources required for long-term recovery. Federal assistance to support the impacted communities aligns directly with the long-term economic, environmental, and social justice priorities of your administration.

I appreciate your administration's recognition of the direct impact of climate change on emergency management. This is evidenced through FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell's acknowledgement of the adverse repercussions of climate change on our nation and the rededication of federal support to states, like California, that are managing complex, concurrent, and multiyear recovery efforts, while preparing for the immediate risk of additional devastating disasters.

I am particularly grateful for Administrator Criswell's visit to California in July 2021 to discuss wildfire preparedness, response, and mitigation efforts. It was a privilege to host the Administrator and allow her to witness firsthand areas

impacted by wildfires and ongoing drought. The visit concluded with an informative discussion focused on California's wildfire recovery challenges.

As my staff and I conveyed to Administrator Criswell during her visit, the resources needed to respond to California's unprecedented wildfire and climate-driven events, including this year's Heat Dome event, are beyond the State's capabilities. Federal support is paramount to California's success in responding to and recovering from the destruction caused by each year's frequent and catastrophic disasters.

In support of this request for a major disaster declaration for the State of California, I am including below information on the extent of ongoing response, physical destruction, and community impacts in affected areas within Siskiyou, Riverside, El Dorado, Placer, Madera, and Modoc Counties.

Mill and Mountain Fires (Siskiyou County)

The Mill and Mountain Fires ignited simultaneously on September 2, 2022, during a Red Flag Warning in Siskiyou County, a high fire risk area impacted by nine federally declared wildfires since 2020. Combined, the fires burned almost 17,000 acres and were active for a total of 28 days. Containment required 2,196 personnel and the deployment of 319 resources, including 201 engines, 46 water tenders, 61 dozers, and 19 helicopters.

Tragically, the Mill Fire moved through the Lincoln Heights residential area so rapidly that two residents were unable to evacuate and perished within their separate homes. A husband of one of these victims was airlifted to a burn center with severe injuries. The Mill and Mountain Fires have had an astronomic impact on a county already facing significant challenges with a 14 percent poverty rate and significant population needs, including 19 percent of the population receiving Supplemental Nutrition and Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, 19 percent with disabilities, 7 percent receiving Medicare benefits, and 25 percent elderly. At the peak of the fires, more than 8,500 individuals and households lost power due to transmission loss to a critical facility and affected poles and lines. In addition, 5,550 people were forced to evacuate. A total of 91 residences were destroyed as a result of the Mill Fire, and an additional home was destroyed in the Mountain Fire. Approximately 30 households sheltered in hotels. Of those households, 8 identified significant access and functional needs, 7 included children under the age of 16; and 3 required Laotian translation. More than 50 percent of those sheltered were over the age of 55.

Due to these tragic events, the State and County coordinated resources to establish a local assistance center (LAC) that served 857 households over 3

days, reflecting the magnitude of loss and unmet needs. Siskiyou County is providing non-congregate sheltering for up to 70 evacuees in hotels. Non-governmental organization (NGO) fundraising will be insufficient to support long-term recovery.

The Mill Fire destroyed a Lake Shastina sewer pump house, which caused the system to be offline for one week until the station could be temporarily restored while awaiting permanent repairs. Within the City of Weed, water and sewer systems require replacement due to melted pipes, and an entire system flush is needed to ensure toxic contaminants are not within the system. Additional impacts occurred to multiple roads, which were closed due to damage caused by the intensity of the fires and contamination from debris.

Business in the area was notably impacted by the fires. The fires ignited at the onset of the Labor Day weekend, a period during which multiple festivals were planned throughout the City of Weed and Siskiyou County. The closure of main roadways and the loss of power significantly impacted tourism. The loss of tax dollars from the festivals impacted by the fires decreased the area's substantial source of income particularly when combined with Siskiyou County's economic impact from three consecutive years of significant fires.

The Mill and Mountain Fires came on the heels of the McKinney Fire in August 2022, which burned within 30 miles of the Mill Fire burn area. The McKinney Fire destroyed 118 residences and received a U.S. Small Business Administration declaration. In response to the McKinney Fire, Siskiyou County opened a two-day operational LAC that served 511 households.

Siskiyou County is particularly disadvantaged. The City of Weed and surrounding areas have a high level of social vulnerability as its census tract ranks in the 75th percentile of the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's Social Vulnerability Index (SVI). The median household income in the City of Weed is \$27,500. With a highly vulnerable population in the 72nd percentile for SVI, Siskiyou County will require enhanced support, beyond the State's current capacity, to recover from these fires.

Due to severe staffing shortages, county behavioral health providers are very limited in their ability to provide sustained disaster-specific crisis counseling services to the impacted communities. As the majority of the City of Weed lived through and survived the Boles Fire 8 years ago, the re-occurrence of such devastation in the small town is evident. Siskiyou County's shelter coordinator received requests daily for assistance in locating counseling and crisis services for residents and evacuees. Available resources are often limited to one-time

virtual sessions or services through the schools, or only serving individuals with the most critical needs. Local services accessible regardless of income throughout the recovery process are needed. The school districts continually request assistance in securing long-term counseling services.

Within the City of Weed, Lincoln Heights is a predominantly African American community that was drawn to this area for economic opportunities and has survived for more than a century despite extreme adversity. Historically, this community has been employed by the Weed Lumber Company, a business that permitted deeply segregated working conditions. Due to the proximity of Lincoln Heights to the lumber company, the socioeconomic impacts on this community continue to persist today. The Mill Fire resulted in the destruction of this impoverished community.

The Mill Fire impacted communities with vastly different demographics. Within the City of Weed 60 percent of the residences were renters, of which 5 percent had renter insurance, and 40 percent were homeowners that reported being uninsured or underinsured. Within Lake Shastina, the preliminary collection of Rights of Entry forms identifies 60 percent of residences are primary homes while 40 percent are rentals. Of the total destroyed homes within Lake Shastina, 65 percent carry adequate insurance coverage. In total within Siskiyou County, an estimated 42 percent of homes are uninsured. On average it will cost \$740,418 to rebuild a typical home and the total uninsured rebuild costs are \$28,609,752 in Siskiyou County.

Depriving Siskiyou County of requested federal assistance will severely and negatively impact their ability to fully recover.

Mosquito Fire (El Dorado and Placer Counties)

The Mosquito Fire erupted in Placer County on September 6, 2022, near the Middle Fork of the American River adjacent to the Oxbow Reservoir Placer County Water Agency Hydroelectric Plant. The Mosquito Fire is 95 percent contained with more than 76,788 acres consumed. At the peak of the response, 3,453 personnel were assigned to the Mosquito Fire, as well as 383 engines, 95 bulldozers, 80 water tenders, and 23 helicopters.

The fire destroyed 92 structures, including 43 homes and 12 home-based businesses. The fire threatened powerlines and critical infrastructure, as well as watersheds and cultural and heritage resources. More than 11,768 residents in El Dorado and Placer Counties were ordered to evacuate. Those evacuation orders necessitated the opening of three shelters in El Dorado and Placer Counties. Over 2,675 customers suffered power outages. The State and counties

coordinated resources to establish two LACs that served a combined total of 188 households. Both counties have an aging population. In El Dorado County, 21 percent of the population is 65 or older and in Placer County, 20 percent of the population is 65 and over. Placer and El Dorado Counties' economies depend on heavy tourism and have a high share of leisure and hospitality jobs, which have been devastated by the fires.

School impacts are extensive. Foresthill schools were closed for nearly 3 weeks, whereby over 550 students were unable to attend classes or maintain adequate social interaction. Additionally, approximately 40 percent of affected students were eligible for free or low-cost meals and may not have received their daily nutritional needs during the fire evacuations and subsequent school closures.

Both counties have established Mosquito Fire relief funds. However, these are geared toward immediate needs, considering NGOs are still focused on recovery efforts from the 2021 Caldor Fire recovery. This indicates there will be limited resources to support long-term recovery from the Mosquito Fire.

Of critical importance to the area is the Middle Fork Project, constructed with local funds managed by Placer County Water Agency (PCWA), which provides a stable water supply that supports the economy and local agricultural industry, as well as enough hydroelectric energy to power western Placer County. PCWA estimates damages upward of \$5,000,000 due to the Mosquito Fire.

The community of Foresthill has borne the brunt of the impact of the Mosquito Fire thus far. With a per capita income 15 percent below the national average, residents will struggle to recover without federal assistance.

In Placer County, an estimated 35 percent of homes are uninsured. On average, it will cost \$845,460 to rebuild a typical home and the total uninsured rebuild costs are \$6,510,042 in Placer County. In El Dorado County, an estimated 35 percent of homes are uninsured. On average, it will cost \$778,855 to rebuild a typical home and the total uninsured rebuild costs are \$5,724,584 in El Dorado County. The loss of a single property will have lasting and disruptive effects for residents, as many of the homes in this area have been passed down for generations and are properties with immediate and extended family members living on a single property.

Based on data provided by Placer County survivors that attended the Mosquito Fire LACs, 64 percent self-reported as insured and 27 percent self-reported as renters. Given the difficulty in finding and maintaining fire insurance in areas designated as a "Very High" Fire Hazard Severity Zone, it is likely many of the

properties reported as insured are insufficiently covered for all the costs associated with cleanup (debris removal including hazard trees) and rebuilding (construction labor and material).

Fairview Fire (Riverside County)

The Fairview Fire ignited in Riverside County on September 5, 2022. It consumed nearly 30,000 acres and is at 98 percent containment as of October 4, 2022. Tragically, a family fleeing the Fairview Fire suffered extreme and heartbreaking loss. Although the mother was able to escape, she suffered severe burns and required Life Flight transport. The father and daughter were caught in the fire and perished within their vehicle. At the fire's peak, response required 2,241 personnel who operated 241 engines, 25 water tenders, 36 dozers, and 16 helicopters to reach containment.

The fire destroyed 36 structures, which includes 21 homes, and forced the evacuation of 37,930 individuals. Shelters established as a result of the Fairview Fire, specifically within Hemet, experienced a disproportionate amount of issues related to access and functional needs as a majority of the individuals were elderly with many requiring special attention. Critical power infrastructure was affected, causing outages for nearly 2,000 customers. In addition, damage to the municipal water system affected 12,000 residents.

Hemet, the city most directly affected by the Fairview Fire, is classified as a disadvantaged community by the federal government's Climate and Economic Justice screening tool, meaning it is above the threshold for both environmental or climate indicators and socioeconomic indicators. It ranks below the 13th percentile on California's Healthy Places Index, a composite metric of 23 determinants of health and life expectancy at birth. In 2022, the American Lung Association ranked Riverside County second-worst nationally for ozone pollution in the U.S., behind only neighboring San Bernardino County.

FEMA's National Risk Index, places Riverside County in the 99.9 percentile for its vulnerability to natural disasters, with risk from heat waves, wildfires, and riverine flooding, along with low community resilience contributing to this ranking. The immense risk of future climate events in Riverside County combined with the vulnerable health status of the affected community makes it clear that resources are needed to support sustainable and equitable recovery efforts.

In Riverside County, an estimated 44 percent of homes are uninsured. Most are primary residents with rentals and business (small business, agriculture, communications, livestock, camps, etc.) intertwined. It is estimated that 34.4 percent of the survivors are renters with the remaining 65.6 percent being

homeowners. On average, it will cost \$545,454 to rebuild a typical home and the total uninsured rebuild costs are \$5,039,995 in Riverside County.

Vulnerable populations within the community of Hemet are impacted by damage to the local energy and telecommunications provider, Poly Butte Networks, an independent internet service provider and the only provider to local residents. In the aftermath of the Fairview Fire, a lack of internet access will significantly impact the community's ability to obtain resources or aid survivors in accessing external recovery help in this rural community.

Fork Fire (Madera County)

The Fork Fire ignited on September 7, 2022. It burned 819 acres and threatened 1,600 structures in a concentrated area. CAL FIRE responded with 378 personnel, who operated 45 engines, 9 water tenders, and 2 dozers.

The fire forced evacuation of 771 people and destroyed 39 structures, which includes 27 homes. Damage to power infrastructure resulted in outages for 2,090 customers, and the county has devoted resources to clearing fallen trees from public rights of way, executing watershed mitigation efforts, and repairing roads in the area. The local water supply was impacted and remains at risk.

The State and County coordinated resources to establish a LAC that served 129 households. North Fork, the community most directly affected by the Fork Fire, is low-income and many residents live in trailers. Tribal members of the North Fork Rancheria of Mono Indians and the Picayune Tribe of Chukchansi were particularly impacted. The Rancheria has indicated that food, medication, and durable medical equipment is in limited supply. The local Voluntary Agencies Active in Disaster (VOAD) has identified the lack of a local community foundation, and limited resources from nonprofits, as a major concern.

The culture and economy of North Fork, and particularly that of local tribes, is inextricably linked to the health of the Sierra National Forest. The indigenous population is committed to applying their ancestral knowledge to forest management and environmental stewardship. Recovery efforts must both prioritize their involvement and target resources to vulnerable residents.

Many of the homes in the impacted communities are multi-generational, which tend to have high rates of uninsurance or underinsurance. Of the 27 homes that burned, 5 are renter-occupied and 85 percent are uninsured or underinsured. As a whole, in Madera County, an estimated 40 percent of homes are uninsured. On average, it will cost \$583,570 to rebuild a typical home and the total uninsured rebuild costs are \$6,302,556 in Madera County.

Barnes Fire (Modoc County)

The Barnes Fire ignited in Modoc County on September 7, 2022, and burned 5,843 acres forcing evacuation of 20 residents and resulting in the destruction of one home. The fire was contained in 11 days with assistance from 633 personnel, 38 engines, 5 water tenders, 19 dozers, and 6 helicopters deployed to the incident. At the peak of the Barnes Fire, 20 people were forced to evacuate.

Modoc County is particularly disadvantaged. The county has an 18 percent poverty rate with 41 percent of the population receiving SNAP benefits, 16 percent with a disability, and 10 percent receiving Medicare benefits. Modoc County has a high level of overall social vulnerability, ranking in the 75th percentile of the SVI. Impacted areas within Modoc County suffer from an overall lower per capita income, \$52,779 compared to \$70,192 at the state level, and high aging, single parent, minority, and disabled populations.

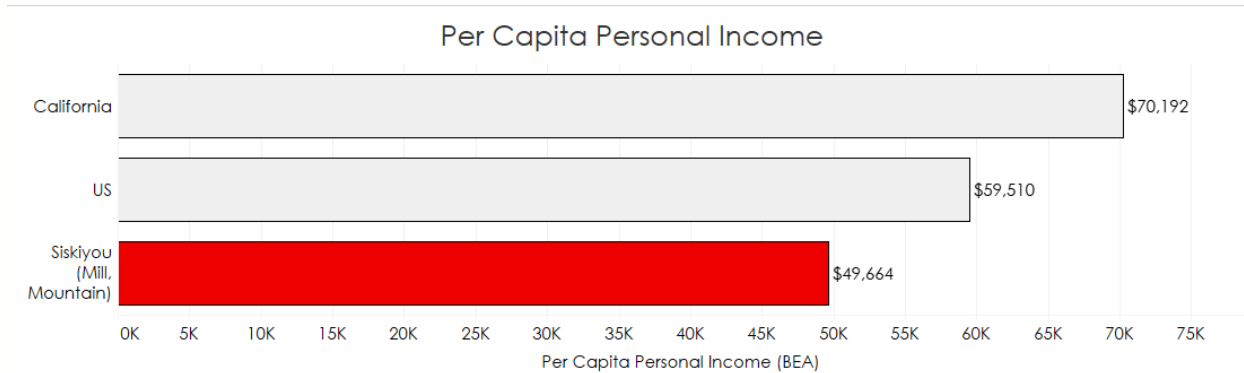
Local nonprofit groups that provide resources to assist with recovery are sparse within this area and there is no known community foundation at present. It is unlikely that a local recovery fund will be established to assist survivors with the necessary provisions to assist with replacing personal property, rebuilding efforts, or delivery of food supplies. Due to these factors, Modoc County will require enhanced support to recover from these fires.

Individuals and Households Program Cost-to-Capacity (ICC) Ratio

$$ICC \text{ Ratio} = \frac{1,811,881}{3,413,100} = 0.53$$

As you are aware, FEMA utilizes a state's Total Taxable Resources to formulate the ICC ratio. In California, this method fails to reflect the state's population, and its expenditures relevant to responding to, recovering from, and mitigating against disasters. Awarding funds based upon this method reinforces wealth inequality and effectively pre-disqualifies California's rural and disadvantaged communities from federal aid by holding them to a standard set by limited economic sectors within a few wealthy counties.

However, FEMA also recognizes that low per capita personal income may indicate a need for supplemental Federal assistance. In Siskiyou County, this need is clearly evidenced by a local per capita personal income 17 percent below the national average of \$59,510:



This income gap widens to 29 percent when compared to the state overall, which again highlights the wealth inequality that masks California’s widespread social vulnerability. Siskiyou County ranks in the 72nd percentile of SVI, with large populations of elderly, disabled, those receiving government assistance, and individuals living in poverty. The area encompassing the City of Weed is even more vulnerable at 75th percentile of SVI.

Prior to the Heat Dome and its subsequent fires, Siskiyou County faced a long summer with cumulative disaster impacts, which include the McKinney Fire that destroyed 118 homes. Just in response to the McKinney, Mill, and Mountain Fires, LACs were stretched by overflow demand with nearly 1,400 households served over a collective period of 5 days. Impacted Siskiyou County communities will need more resources if meaningful and equitable long-term recovery is to be achieved.

State Fiscal Capacity for Wildfire Response

Two years after the end of the COVID-19 pandemic, the U.S. and California economies have begun the slow road to recovery. There has been recent cause for concern, however. The U.S. unemployment rate increased to 3.7 percent in August 2022 from 3.5 percent in July, and California’s unemployment rate mirrored this increase, with an increase from 3.9 percent to 4.1 percent during the same period. August represents the first time since May of 2020 that California’s unemployment rate saw a month-over-month increase.

Year-to-date, U.S. headline inflation averaged 8.3 percent, up from 3.9 percent for the same period last year. U.S. core inflation averaged 6.2 percent year-to-date, up from 3 percent in the same period in 2021. California experienced similar inflationary growth, averaging 8.3 percent as of June 2022.

While the economic and revenue outlook has improved since the recession, the state has faced similar tax revenue warning signs in the last few months. Preliminary General Fund agency cash receipts for August were 6 percent (\$816

million) below the 2022-23 Budget Act forecast of \$13.6 billion. Cash receipts for the first two months of the 2022-23 fiscal year were 8.4 percent (\$2 billion) below the forecast of \$24 billion. Preliminary General Fund agency cash receipts for the 2021-22 fiscal year were \$2.2 billion below the forecast of \$234 billion, mostly due to a large shortfall in personal income tax receipts in June. Therefore, for the prior fiscal year and the current fiscal year-to-date combined, preliminary General Fund agency cash receipts were \$4.2 billion below forecast. Shortfalls in August continued to be largely driven by lower proceeds from personal income tax; however, the month also saw lower proceeds from sales and corporation taxes.

Projected structural operating deficits through 2024-25 demonstrate the state's limited fiscal capacity. As noted in the general fund multi-year forecast from the state's recently enacted 2022-23 Budget, the state is projecting operating deficits of over \$14.7 billion in 2022-23 and ranging from \$708 million to over \$6 billion every year through 2024-25. It is important to note these forecasts were made before the most recent downturn in state revenues. Further, significant risks to the economic and revenue forecasts remain, including international political instability, new coronavirus variants, higher inflation, and a stock market decline that would significantly impact state revenues.

The rural nature of the northern impacted areas leads to a less diversified economy, with a reliance on agriculture and/or tourism-related activities. Siskiyou and Modoc Counties rely heavily on agricultural, forestry, and the healthcare and social assistance sectors. The poverty rate in these counties is higher than the state as a whole. Although El Dorado and Placer Counties had a higher pre-disaster personal income per capita and lower poverty rate and unemployment rate than the U.S. in 2020, they had a higher share of leisure and hospitality and construction sectors, which makes these counties' economies particularly vulnerable to the impacts of fires. Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic already depressed these sectors, and these fires will significantly and negatively exacerbate that impact, further threatening livelihoods in these communities.

Riverside County's per capita personal income is lower and the county's unemployment rate is higher than the average in California, and the county has continued to lose manufacturing jobs over the last few decades.

Real Gross Domestic Production (billions of chained 2012 dollars)									
	2020:Q1	2020:Q2	2020:Q3	2020:Q4	2021:Q1	2021:Q2	2021:Q3	2021:Q4	2022:Q1
U.S.	\$18,951,992	\$17,258,205	\$18,560,774	\$18,767,778	\$19,055,655	\$19,368,310	\$19,478,893	\$19,806,290	\$19,727,918
California	\$2,739,612	\$2,496,458	\$2,690,337	\$2,728,256	\$2,799,129	\$2,860,602	\$2,879,899	\$2,946,067	\$2,939,040
Texas	\$968,140	\$887,134	\$958,143	\$962,586	\$978,444	\$1,006,240	\$1,015,729	\$1,034,362	\$1,031,018

New York	\$1,478,702	\$1,336,586	\$1,427,035	\$1,438,242	\$1,463,162	\$1,489,938	\$1,498,318	\$1,515,819	\$1,510,976
Florida	\$1,783,603	\$1,640,169	\$1,745,367	\$1,768,146	\$1,786,515	\$1,820,328	\$1,836,855	\$1,881,751	\$1,870,874

Comparison of Select Economic Indicators						
	Personal Income per Capita	Official Poverty Measure	Unemployment Rate	Share of Total Employment in Agriculture	Share of Nonfarm Employment in Leisure and Hospitality	Share of Nonfarm Employment in Mining, Logging, and Construction
United States	\$59,510	11.6%	3.7%	1.2%	10.3%	5.5%
California	\$70,192	12.3%	4.1%	2.1%	10.9%	5.3%
El Dorado	\$72,662	8.4%	3.0%	1.0%	10.3%	7.6%
Madera	\$44,532	14.1%	5.6%	23.5%	9.2%	5.4%
Modoc	\$52,779	17.9%	4.0 %	16.0%	11.2%	6.0%
Placer	\$72,279	6.5%	2.5%	1.0%	10.3%	7.6%
Riverside	\$45,834	11.2%	4.3%	0.8%	11.0%	6.9%
Siskiyou	\$49,664	14.3%	4.8%	7.9%	13.0%	6.0%

Conclusion

The Heat Dome is an event of historic significance that suffocated California for over a week, sent temperatures to all-time record highs in many communities, and created the perfect weather and environmental conditions to cause the explosive spread of the Mill, Mountain, Fairview, Mosquito, Fork, and Barnes Fires across the state.

Tragically, four lives were lost during these events and critical injuries were sustained by many others. The fires drove 55,268 individuals out of their homes and forced 465 disaster survivors to seek shelter as they watched the fires burn nearly 130,000 acres of their communities. A total of 183 homes were destroyed, despite California's best firefighting efforts during the Heat Dome's dangerous and record-breaking temperatures. This devastating destruction has left families homeless during a time when securing affordable housing is already challenging and a severe lack of housing stock continues to plague these impacted communities.

The wildfire danger we currently face is one of our gravest homeland security threats. More than 25 million acres of California wildlands are classified as under very high or extreme fire threat, and approximately 25 percent of the state's population—roughly 10 million people—live in high-risk areas. This includes thousands of communities, from small mountain towns to suburbs and large urban cities. Socially vulnerable and impoverished communities, such as Lincoln Heights in Siskiyou County, now find themselves in an even more dire situation than they did prior to the fires. Solving this year's crises requires solutions that

transcend all levels of government and help establish a unified approach to response and recovery to these wildfires.

As stated in the details above, the Heat Dome event and the resulting six fires exhausted California's resources, producing an impact of such magnitude and severity that effective response and recovery to address ongoing community needs is now beyond state and local capacity. The estimated FEMA-eligible Public Assistance costs for the six wildfires is \$187,033,575. Even with FMAG Program reimbursement for the Mill, Fairview, and Mosquito Fires, the eligible cost to state and local government, including the non-federal share, is \$104,701,776, far exceeding the statewide indicator for California. In addition to FEMA-eligible Public Assistance costs, the state and localities will continue to incur substantial costs associated with survivor support and recovery.

It is for these reasons and in accordance with 44 CFR Section 206.36(c)(4) that I respectfully request the following federal assistance for the Heat Dome event, and the resulting Mill, Mountain, Fairview, Mosquito, Fork, and Barnes Fires: all Individual Assistance Programs, all categories of Public Assistance, and any other appropriate Stafford Act disaster assistance programs; U.S. Small Business Administration disaster loans and funds from the U.S. Department of Agriculture Emergency Loan Program; and Hazard Mitigation statewide.

Denial of this request will diminish the State's ability to provide essential recovery services to these disaster survivors, as well as hinder their communities from recouping millions of dollars of federally available funding. Granting a major disaster declaration will provide the necessary federal assistance to support recovery and minimize suffering. Without this critical support, these impoverished communities may never be able to fully recover.

Thank you again for your assistance in combating the Heat Dome's impacts on California communities. I appreciate your continued support and recognition that this is an unprecedented and historic event, in which exercising your discretionary authority to grant this request is warranted.

Certification

As required and in accordance with 44 CFR Section 206.36(c)(5), I certify that 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 Cal OES, Mark Ghilarducci, as the State Coordinating Officer for this request. Director Ghilarducci may provide further information or justification on my behalf.

I appreciate your support and recognition of the threat the Heat Dome event and resulting Mill, Mountain, Fairview, Mosquito, Fork, and Barnes Fires continue to pose to the State of California and its residents and thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gavin Newsom', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Gavin Newsom
Governor of California

Enclosures:

- Federal Form 010-0-13
- 2022 Heat Dome Presentation
- Per Capita Income Data by County
- Underinsurance Rates by County
- Homeownership, Renter-Occupied, and Insurance Rate by County
- Insurance Estimates by County
- Disaster Related Unemployment Type by County
- Workforce Employment Data by County
- Total Employment Count by County
- Comparison of Select Economic Indicators by County
- Gross Domestic Production
- Heat Dome Resources, Personnel, Damage
- Vulnerable Populations and General Population Demographics
- 24 Months Stafford Act and State Declarations
- List of Federally Recognized Tribes