



STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

CHRISTOPHER T. SUNUNU
Governor

August 30, 2023

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Through: Lori Ehrlich
Regional Administrator
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Federal Emergency Management Agency Region I
220 Binney Street
Cambridge, MA 02142

Dear 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 respectfully request that a major disaster be declared for the State of New Hampshire. This request is due to impacts from severe storms and flooding from July 9-July 17, 2023, that resulted in damages being validated throughout the Joint Preliminary Damage Assessment (PDA) process in Belknap, Carroll, Cheshire, Coos, Grafton, Hillsborough, Merrimack, Rockingham, and Sullivan counties and overwhelmed State and local resources requiring an immediate and urgent response.

I, hereby request a designation of the full Public Assistance Program for Belknap, Carroll, Cheshire, Coos, Grafton, Hillsborough, Merrimack, Rockingham, and Sullivan counties, and a statewide designation of the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program.

As a direct result of the incident, roads throughout the state were undermined, roadside shoulders, ditches, and adjacent slopes were washed away. State and local culverts, pipe headwalls, and other drainage structures were overwhelmed with water and debris causing damage or complete destruction to the drainage system and surrounding areas and infrastructure. The increased amount of flash flooding saturated the surrounding ground so water that would have normally been conveyed by the drainage system was forced to detour to other areas not designed to handle such flows. These damages presented a hazard to the travel of the public, as well as obstacles for first responders in preserving public health and safety. The extensive damage to state, local, and private roads in these communities trapped residents in their homes and prevented access by emergency personnel. The impact of this event was felt throughout the local mutual aid and state systems as personnel and assets were diverted to the incident area. The response consumed staff time and

exhausted available resources due to significant flash flooding conditions that caused extensive roadway destruction and left debris that restricted travel and emergency operations.

A Weather Impact Summary was requested and received from the National Weather Service and has been provided as an enclosure to this letter. Though not included within this major disaster declaration, it is imperative to note the significance of the rainfall prior to July 9, 2023. As the NWS stated within their summary, “The period was dominated by upper-level disturbances and deep southerly flow that brought very moist air masses to the state which supplied atmospheric ingredients for heavy rainfall rates.”

According to data from the NWS, there were 38 flash flood warnings in the month of July, which is more than any full year on record. Much of the state received more than 10” of rain through this incident period, with the lowest rainfall amounts occurring from Concord down to the Seacoast.

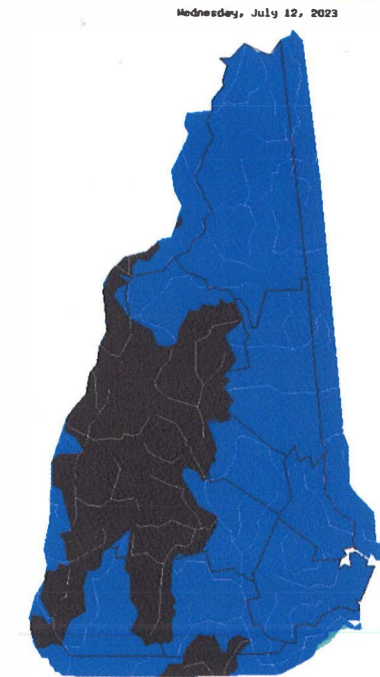
On July 9, NWS reached out directly to Assistant Director of NH Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEM) Megan A. Hoskins to provide notice of the expected intensity of the incoming weather to the state. The following day, NH HSEM hosted a call with the NWS in the morning and afternoon to discuss the impacts of flooding. These calls were coordinated due to the phone call NH HSEM received the day prior and included state and federal partners, as well as local officials from several counties. Additional communications from NWS stated New Hampshire was, “completely primed for significant flooding,” since nearly all the rivers are at the 90th percentile or above for flows with some rivers at record flows for the date.

The one-pager issued by the NWS on July 12, 2023, stated, “An active weather pattern will quickly return to the region starting [July 13] and continue through [July 17]. Repeating rounds of heavy rainfall on already wet ground will increase the threat of flash floods, some potentially significant. Rivers and reservoirs, currently receding, are already at high levels and can expect additional rises over the weekend.”

On July 13, NH HSEM hosted a call with NWS to discuss anticipated continuing impacts because of rainfall. Additional calls also were held on both July 15 and July 16 for appropriate stakeholders to discuss on-going flooding concerns.

The graphic below, highlighting the current streamflow based on July 12 data compared to historical data, was provided by NWS during the July 13 decision support briefing.

USGS Current Streamflows compared to historical normal (7/12/23)



USGS

Explanation - Percentile classes							
Low	<10	10-24	25-75	76-90	>90	High	Not-ranked
	Much below normal	Below normal	Normal	Above normal	Much above normal		

Continuing during the decision support briefing on July 13, the NWS reiterated concerns of thunderstorms, flash flooding and gusty winds to be possible until daybreak on July 14. A two-to-five-day flood risk timeline also was provided, which showed that Thursday, July 13, and Friday, July 14, the state could anticipate elevated impacts with moderate confidence. The threat of flash flood potential was anticipated to crest by Sunday, July 15, with high confidence the state would see significant impacts. Though no rivers were anticipated to be in an actionable flood stage, “Rivers across the state are running well above normal and most will be susceptible to flooding depending on the placement of heaviest rain,” according to the NWS briefing slides.

On July 14, the one-pager issued in the morning stated, “The active weather pattern continues, with the next round expected to arrive today through tonight.”

On July 15, the one-pager issued warned of repeating rounds of torrential showers and thunderstorms falling over already wet ground. According to the NWS impact summary, “Up to 2” fell in an hour over the urban city area,” of Manchester on that date. Intense rainfall rates led to rapid run-off and caused localized urban flooding.

The following day, there was, "...a more widespread area of rain [which] impacted most of the state," according to the NWS impact summary. This included rainfall amounts of 2+ inches across central parts of the state, along with observed regional reports of 3+ inches and even one 4+ inch report.

The State was unable to immediately perform Joint PDAs due to hazardous conditions as the severe storms and flooding were ongoing from mid-June as described in the NWS impact summary. This was further delayed by the delay of Initial Damage Assessments (IDAs) due to on-going response activities. It was determined that it was unsafe for local, state, and federal officials to be operating within areas where flood waters had not fully receded.

Though the National Weather Service (NWS) indicates for FEMA's purposes that this incident period there were two different storms on July 9-11, 2023, and again on July 15-17, the impacts were substantial during the entire timeframe. It should be noted that consistent with our appeal relative to the incident period for the July and August 2021 flooding, there is no requirement in the Stafford Act, Code of Federal Regulation (CFR), or the Public Assistance Program and Policy Guide Version 4 that states there must be continuous flooding in the same location for the purpose of a major disaster declaration. Additionally, the State has previously received a declaration that encompasses back-to-back winter storms and flooding that occurred from March 2-8, 2018. This provides a point of reference for a previous decision made by FEMA to utilize the flexibility of the CFR definition of "incident period" to combine multiple storm events.

Based on Initial Damage Assessments (IDA) reported by local communities and state agencies, the Director of HSEM Robert M. Buxton, requested the Joint PDA process on July 7, and they began on July 24, 2023. It is important to note, the Joint PDA process was delayed as response efforts were on-going for both local and state agencies. As previously mentioned, it was unsafe for local, state, and federal official to be conducting Joint PDAs while active flooding was occurring in communities.

It was next determined that the Joint PDA process would capture damages from June 17-July 17, 2023, due to the original request being submitted as "ongoing." The Joint PDAs were requested for the following counties: Belknap, Carroll, Cheshire, Coos, Grafton, Hillsborough, Merrimack, Rockingham, Strafford, and Sullivan. No damages were reviewed in Strafford County based on further review of IDAs. The effects of this incident in the State of New Hampshire are evident as demonstrated in the Public Assistance enclosure B.

More than 30 Joint PDAs were completed in nine different counties. From data collected during the IDA process that the State of New Hampshire completed, more than \$21 million in damages were reported from the severe storms and flooding between June 17 and July 17, 2023.

Current local and state damages have been validated and exceed the State indicator \$2,438,226 (\$1.77 per capita). The figures captured in Enclosure B reflect uninsured losses and the overall costs were significantly higher. The Joint PDAs focused on reviewing damages to Category A - Debris Removal, Category B - Emergency Protective Measures, Category C - Roads and Bridges, and Category D - Water Control Facilities. At the conclusion of the Joint PDAs \$8,588,764 were validated in eligible Public Assistance damages. FEMA additionally did not include \$364,916 in

what were described as “soft costs,” from a third-party entity that provided a cost estimate for reasonable repairs to be made at a damage site. These costs are reflected within the submitted Enclosure B.

Additionally, more than \$75,000 in previously validated damages within Merrimack County were not included due to procurement concerns. There were additional damages reported by communities not included due to the same concerns. There was no consideration of exigent circumstances that required the Towns to conduct the necessary repairs in the immediate timeframe that they had following the incident period.

NH Department of Transportation (NH DOT) had nearly \$1.25 million in validated damages through the Joint PDA process are eligible through the Public Assistance program and it is expected there likely be more as damages still being discovered. NH DOT reported significant shoulder washouts, road collapses, roadway washouts and culvert damages. The NH DOT crews conducted emergency responses such as setting up barriers and detours, clearing debris, and making as many roads passable as possible throughout the incident period. An estimated 56 state roads were damaged, with 77 sites of damage, between July 9 and July 17, 2023. The damages included slope failures, massive sink holes, overtopping of several box culverts, and a culvert structure that failed causing a washout of a roadway estimated to cost \$1,000,000 to repair.

On August 8, 2023, Assistant Commissioner and Chief Engineer of NH DOT submitted the notice of intent to request emergency relief funds to assist in the cost of repairing damages on Federal-aid highways. NH DOT estimated that more than \$5 million in damages occurred from July 9-July 17, 2023, within several different counties.

Emergency protective measures were widespread throughout the entire incident period. Multiple swift water rescues and other types of emergency responses were performed in several different locations throughout the incident period:

- On July 9, in Swanzey (Cheshire County) an ambulance was sent to assist in evacuating a resident on Swanzey Lake Road when the road collapsed under it. The same evening, the Fire Department responded with the City of Keene (Cheshire County) swift water rescue team because of Swanzey Lake overflowing. This caused over 100 vehicles to become stranded and then required the evacuation of nearly 150 guests of the Pilgrim Pines Camp and Retreat Center.
- On July 11, in Walpole (Cheshire County), the North Walpole Fire Department conducted recommended evacuations of a small area for residents’ safety.
- On July 12, in Lebanon (Grafton County), firefighters rescued three people aboard a pontoon boat that had a mechanical failure and became stuck against the Mascoma Dam.
- On July 13, fire departments responded in both Lyme (Grafton County) and Litchfield (Hillsborough County) due to lightning strikes at private residences.
- On July 14, fire departments responded in Pelham (Hillsborough County) to a commercial business for a reported lightning strike with a smoke condition in the building; in Salem (Rockingham County), for a Birthing Center that was possibly struck by lightning; and in Greenland (Rockingham County) to a commercial business that was reportedly struck by lightning, which caused the electrical panel to smoke.

- On July 16, in Barnstead (Belknap County), a 16-year-old was rescued after his kayak was swept over the Suncook River Dam after attempting to rescue his dog. The Barnstead Fire Department was able to quickly rescue the boy and he thankfully uninjured.
- On July 17, in Conway (Carroll County), the Conway Fire Department rescued 11 people from the Saco River after a canoe overturned. All individuals were rescued safely and brought to shore uninjured. This summer the Conway Fire Department has rescued 23 people. In an average year, there are only six to 10 rescues.

Unfortunately, there was one death recorded by the NH Department of Justice, Office of the Chief Medical Examiner where an individual suffered a medical event whilst working around their property to mitigate damage from the heavy rains. Data is unavailable to provide a clear response on if there were any serious injuries during the incident period.

These are just a few of the many different stories that New Hampshire fire departments have faced with the high flood waters. Though the challenges have not been with just the fire departments but on the public works departments, too. The NH Public Works Mutual Aid is a statewide program where communities can either provide or request assistance. The Town of Washington (Sullivan County) was one of several communities to access this program for receiving aid from other communities. Washington received assistance from Bedford, Wilton, and Derry to repair their roadways.

Town of Acworth, Sullivan County | Due to impacts from the incident period, the Emergency Management Director reported approximately 90% of the town's roads had been destroyed. In fact, the same 32 roads that were damaged from the July and August 2021 severe storms and flooding were again impacted. At least 10 roads were fully closed while others were and still are in some cases reduced to only a single lane allowing access for emergency vehicles. The Fire Department performed a water rescue for a family of 12 during the incident period. Numerous residents were stranded in their homes and cut off from emergency services due to roads being washed out including two medically high-risk individuals. At the conclusion of the Joint PDA, the Town had \$1,988,540 in validated damages and additional costs are anticipated but were not documented in this process. The 2023 highway and road portion of the Town budget is \$448,593 and the entire operating budget is \$1,551,727. A news article published the week of August 21, stated the Town is estimating about \$20 million in damages. This shows that the estimated costs not only well exceed the road maintenance budget by over 400% but the entire town budget, too.

Town of Lempster, Sullivan County | Due to impacts from the incident period, the Town had to conduct a swift water rescue of three people stranded in vehicles on Allen Road on July 10. The Town also provided mutual aid of their swift water team to assist the Town of Unity. There were approximately a dozen roads in Town that sustained severe damage including shoulder washouts, sinkholes, culverts being washed away, and washouts of both gravel and asphalt roads. Many of the roads were completely impassable. At the conclusion of the Joint PDA, the Town had \$133,652 in validated damages. The 2023 Highway Department budget is \$464,370 which would be nearly one-third of their annual appropriation.

Town of Unity, Sullivan County | Due to impacts from the incident period, the Town had 13 roads that were damaged and one bridge that washed out. Roads needed to be barricaded due to flooding

and the Town had to conduct two rescues using a swift water rescue team from Lempster that responded through mutual aid. Public works and the fire department were called in to help survey road damages. The Fire Department was opened and staffed as an emergency shelter for 48-hours during the incident period. Several culverts were washed-out or damaged, gravel and asphalt roads sustained severe damage and water overtopped the bridge on Stage Road, damaging the structure. At the conclusion of the Joint PDA, the Town had \$175,092 in validated damages. The 2023 highway and streets budget for the Town is \$541,200, which would be 32% of their annual appropriation utilized for making necessary repairs due impacts from the severe storm and flooding.

Town of Washington, Sullivan County | Due to impacts from the incident period, the Town had many roads damaged and some that were entirely impassable. Bailey Road suffered a washout about 1,000-feet-long and 6-feet-deep. That road was filled with over 1,200 tons of gravel to make it passable, and permanent repairs are still needed. The Town had about eight cross drain culverts that washed out causing large parts of the associated road and shoulders to washout as well. The Town emergency operations center was activated and staffed by the Fire Chief and EMS staff, while Town employees worked to place signs and detours for the flooded and closed roads. At the conclusion of the Joint PDA, the Town had \$112,097 in validated damages. The 2022 highway and streets budget for the Town is \$726,350, which would be 15% of their annual appropriation utilized for making necessary repairs due impacts from the severe storm and flooding.

Town of Londonderry, Rockingham County | Due to impacts from the incident period, a drainage site on Perimeter Road, the Manchester-Boston Regional Airport (*a department within the City of Manchester*) sustained significant washout damage. The cost to repair this site will be significant and has been estimated to cost nearly \$2 million. This is a site of significance as it is the main drainage outfall for the nearby airport runway as well as Perimeter Road. This is an engineered site that also acts as a supporting structure for the adjacent airport runway. This site plays an important role in maintaining proper drainage and structural support of main roads and airport runway.

Town of Alstead, Cheshire County | Due to impacts from the incident period, the Town had a total of six roads that were closed due to severe flooding. Multiple culverts were washed out and the pavement was undermined because of it. Within 24 hours, the Town was able to make some emergency repairs and reopen some roads to emergency access only. Seven residents were without emergency access for seven days due to the ongoing flooding and time in which it took floodwaters to fully recede. A swift water rescue team responded to rescue one person trapped in a vehicle and to a residence where people were trapped inside with water flooding into the house. At the conclusion of the Joint PDA, the Town had \$209,327 in validated damages. The 2023 road maintenance budget for the Town is \$358,014, which would be 58% of their annual appropriation utilized for making necessary repairs due impacts from the severe storm and flooding.

Town of Swanzey, Cheshire County | Due to impacts from the incident period, the Town suffered severe damages to their town infrastructure as well as numerous residents reporting damages to their homes and washed-out driveways. Some roads were destroyed leaving residents stranded. Several roads were closed for a week or more. In conducting emergency repairs the Town utilized an estimated 12,000 cubic yards of gravel to make roads passable for first responders. At the

conclusion of the Joint PDA, the Town had \$725,165 in validated damages. The 2023 highway maintenance budget for the Town is only \$1,073,000, which would be 68% of their annual appropriation utilized for making necessary repairs due impacts from the severe storm and flooding.

Town of Winchester, Cheshire County | Due to impacts from the incident period, the Town had many roads that sustained severe damages, which included the loss of ditches and roads being completely stripped down to ledge. The roads that were damaged were impassable for at least 72 hours. During emergency response the town used 1,500 sandbags and had to remove large amounts of debris from Town culverts. A box culvert on Forest Lake Road was heavily damaged and at the time of the Joint PDAs was still closed and would be until the replacement was finished. At the conclusion of the Joint PDA, the Town had \$344,324 in validated damages. The 2023 highway and street maintenance budget is \$757,909, which would be 45% of their annual appropriation utilized for making necessary repairs due impacts from the severe storm and flooding.

Town of Madison, Carroll County | Due to impacts from the incident period, the Town had damage to their public water line, leaving the public with no clean running water. Numerous roads were washed out including Colby Hill Road, Conway Road, Grison Road, and Griffon Road. Some washed out areas resulted in large holes in the road that were 5-feet or more in depth. The Town has estimated that approximately 2,640 feet of road needs to be completely reconstructed. At the conclusion of the Joint PDA, the Town had \$278,811 in validated damages. The yearly budget for road maintenance in the Town is \$427,797, which would be 65% of the annual appropriation utilized for making necessary repairs due impacts from the severe storm and flooding. This is in addition to the impacts this community suffered during the April 30-May 1, 2023, severe storm and flooding.

Town of Ossipee, Carroll County | Due to impacts from the incident period, the Town had significant damages resulting in the need to hire contractors to help in making the roads passable. An estimated 200 campers became stranded until roads could be made passable. Six of the Town roads sustained severe damages and will require new gravel, culverts, and paving. At the conclusion of the Joint PDA, the Town had \$280,415 in validated damages. The 2023 highway budget for the Town is \$1,240,050, which would be nearly a quarter of their annual appropriation utilized for making necessary repairs due impacts from the severe storm and flooding. This is in addition to the extreme impacts this community suffered during the April 30-May 1, 2023, severe storm and flooding that occurred.

Town of Alton, Belknap County | Due to impacts from the incident period, the Town contacted the NH Department of Safety, Division of Emergency Services and Communications for assistance in getting an Emergency Notification out through CodeRed. This message was sent on the afternoon of July 16 and advised residents that many roads are not passable and for them to stay off the roads. Route 11 washed-out leaving an 11-foot-deep drop off. One person required rescue from a stranded car. The Town did open both their local shelter and emergency operations center. At the conclusion of the Joint PDA, the Town had \$431,038 in validated damages. The 2022 road budget for the town was \$1,323,901, which would be nearly one-third of their annual appropriation utilized for making necessary repairs due impacts from the severe storm and flooding.

Town of Barnstead, Belknap County | Due to impacts from the incident period, the Town had approximately 25 roads that required closing due to significant structural damage to either the roadway itself or associated culverts. Many of these roads were completely impassable. There were some areas of town that were completely cut off, and many people were unable to leave their homes due to the hazardous conditions of the town roads. At the conclusion of the Joint PDA, the Town had \$72,240 in validated damages. The 2023 highway budget for the Town is \$1,228,882, which would be 6% of their annual appropriation utilized for making necessary repairs due impacts from the severe storm and flooding.

Town of Clarksville, Coos County | Due to impacts from the incident period, the Town suffered multiple roads washouts from the flooding. Crawford Road had such severe flooding the water removed a 4-foot culvert, essentially splicing the road into two sections, leaving a 20-foot-wide, 4-foot-deep crevice about half-a-mile long. Adjacent ditching along the roadside was severely damaged. Numerous residents near the washed-out roads were cut off from access or egress. On the morning of July 17, the town voted to make a private road an emergency access route while the road agent and crew worked to reopen roads. Old Country Road was closed to through traffic as flooding washed out a 5-foot corrugated metal culvert. About 20 full-time residents had to use a 3-mile detour, which would have added response time for any potential emergency services needed. At the conclusion of the Joint PDA, the Town had \$183,383 in validated damages. The 2022 highway and street maintenance budget for the Town is \$150,000, which would be 122% of their annual appropriation utilized for making necessary repairs due impacts from the severe storm and flooding.

Town of Colebrook, Coos County | Due to impacts from the incident period, the Town had 10 roads that experienced washouts, loss of ditching, gravel, and asphalt as well as broken culverts. A section on Aldrich Road, a retaining wall of gabion baskets along a perennial stream, approximately 8-feet high and 54-feet-long was destroyed and will need to be rebuilt. At the conclusion of the Joint PDA, the Town had \$63,834 in validated damages. The 2023 road maintenance budget for the Town is \$623,930, which would be 10% of their annual appropriation utilized for making necessary repairs due impacts from the severe storm and flooding.

Antrim, Hillsborough County | Though Hillsborough County did not exceed their indicator it is important to note the impacts experienced in this community. Due to severe flooding during the incident period, a total of 27 roads sustained damage and a half dozen suffered significant damages. A bridge on Liberty Farm Road washed out resulting in separating 18 homes from the main part of the community. The Town constructed an emergency lane to regain access to the homes while the bridge remains closed. Multiple culverts were damaged on many roadways. The Fire Department evacuated eight residents due to flooding experienced during the incident period. At the conclusion of the Joint PDA, the Town had \$303,874 in validated damages. The 2023 highway and street budget for the Town is \$948,079, which would be 32% of their annual appropriation utilized for making necessary repairs due impacts from the severe storm and flooding.

Canaan, Grafton County | Though Grafton County did not exceed their indicator it is important to note the impacts experienced in this community. Due to the severe flooding during the incident period the Town had to open their EOC for 3.5 hours to coordinate emergency response efforts such as placing barricades and cones on impacted roadways. The Town placed six 10-wheel dump

truck loads of material in a washed-out area of Potato Road, about 30-feet-long, 12-feet-wide, and 16-feet-deep. Potato Road also had several damaged culverts, which increased the localized impacts of inland flooding. At the conclusion of the Joint PDA, the Town had \$139,101 in validated damages. The 2022 highway maintenance budget for the Town is \$819,255, which would be 17% of their annual appropriation utilized for making necessary repairs due impacts from the severe storm and flooding.

Pittsfield, Merrimack County | Though Merrimack County did not exceed their indicator it is important to note the impacts experienced in this community. Due to severe flooding during the incident period the Town reported many roads washed out including Dowboro Road, which had to be closed, resulting in a lengthy detour for first responders. The Town operated their EOC for eight hours to coordinate emergency response efforts. Town officials claim 9 inches of rain fell in about 3.5 hours. The Town had 35 shoulders washed out from the storm impacts. The Town had a culvert collapse on Mountain Road, two collapse on River Road, one on Cameron Drive and multiple culverts lost on Governor's Road. At the conclusion of the Joint PDA, the Town had \$123,278 in validated damages. The 2023 budget for highway and street maintenance for the town is \$1,089,140, which would be 17% of their annual appropriation utilized for making necessary repairs due impacts from the severe storm and flooding.

Individual Assistance requests from residents have been managed by the state with the assistance from 211 NH. In total, more than 100 cases have been reported to date and it is believed there are many unreported cases in communities. Local communities reported damages to private properties including basement flooding, washed out driveways and large amounts of gravel and silt washing onto residential properties. None of the existing cases have been moved to long term recovery as of this date. NH Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) is being utilized to assist with coordinating assistance, where appropriate.

Though at the State level Community Lifelines remained green throughout the entirety of the incident, individual communities were unable to maintain a green status for their individual lifelines. Impacts were experienced in seven of the eight Community Lifelines.

During the incident period, a portion of Route 11 in Alton (Belknap County) washed out blocking access and leaving many cut off from surrounding towns. This closure along with washouts in a surrounding town cut off the main access road for the Town of Alton to both Huggins Hospital and Concord Hospital – Laconia. Transports from Alton were brought to Frisbee Hospital in Rochester where the transport was at least 15 minutes longer and is not a critical access hospital like Huggins. The Town had two fire stations that were unable to be utilized for responses due to road closures. The West Alton fire station houses a fire engine that was unable to be utilized for nearly four days due to damages of roadways in the community. Additionally, the Fire Department utilized a Utility Task Vehicle for medical transports during the incident period for areas that were inaccessible by ambulance. These examples demonstrate the impacts to the emergency services critical infrastructure sector along with the Safety and Security Community Lifeline.

In the Town of Madison (Carroll County) Route 113 was closed from damages sustained during the incident period until August 14. As a result of this road closure, a detour was opened that added approximately 30 minutes to the transport time to the nearest hospital. This example demonstrates

the impacts to the emergency services critical infrastructure sector and the Health and Medical Community Lifeline.

The City of Lebanon (Grafton County) opened a shelter on July 10 due to anticipated flooding impacts in the community. Thankfully, the City only received one person where they were able to be sheltered closer to their residence. Additional sheltering information is outlined later within this request. This example demonstrates the impacts to the Food, Hydration, and Shelter Community Lifeline.

During the incident period, in the Town of Stoddard (Cheshire County), there were several notable problems with critical infrastructure and community lifelines. Approximately 50 homes in the Town had to have their electricity shut off due to high water. The Town EOC was opened to coordinate evacuation orders and the Fire Department had to be relocated to the EOC because it was on higher ground. This example demonstrates the impacts to the energy critical infrastructure sector and Energy Community Lifeline.

In the Town of Ossipee (Carroll County), Water Village Road, which is owned and operated by the County itself sustained significant washout damage. Though the cost to repair is small comparatively to others within the incident period the impacts are significant due to its function. This road is the only access road leading to a water treatment plant owned and operated by the County as well as a communications tower for the Sheriff's Office. This communications tower is critical in maintaining communication with life-saving emergency services while the water treatment facility provides water to many nearby facilities as well as over 50 private residences. This example demonstrates the impacts to the Communications and Water Systems Community Lifelines.

In the Town of Londonderry (Rockingham County), a drainage site on Perimeter Road, which is owned and operated by the Manchester-Boston Regional Airport (*a department within the City of Manchester*) sustained significant washout damage. This is an engineered site that also acts as a supporting structure for the adjacent airport runway. This site plays an important role in maintaining proper drainage and structural support of main roads and adjacent critical infrastructure. This shows potential impacts to both a heavily traveled main road and airport runway. This example demonstrates the significant impacts to the transportation systems critical infrastructure sector and Transportation Community Lifelines.

Pursuant to the intensity of this severe storm and flooding, from July 9-July 17, 2023, I executed the State Emergency Operations Plan (SEOP) with the activation of the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) to a partial activation level. While I did not declare a State of Emergency in New Hampshire, the nature and amount of State and local governmental resources that have been or will be used to alleviate the conditions of this disaster are as follows:

1. The SEOP was executed on July 10, 2023, and I instructed the Director of HSEM to activate and staff the SEOC. At 0900 hours on July 10, 2023, the SEOC opened at a partial activation level. The SEOC was activated to monitor the situation, coordinate state response activities and to respond to local requests for assistance and resources, if necessary. At 2200 hours on July 10, the SEOC transitioned to enhanced monitoring and

returned to a partial activation level at 0800 on July 11, 2023. The SEOC again transitioned to enhanced monitoring at 1800 hours and returned to a partial activation level at 0800 hours on July 12, 2023. The SEOC closed at 1600 hours and remained closed until it reopened at a partial activation on July 16, 2023, at 1000 hours and remained open overnight and transitioned to enhanced monitoring around 0830 hours on July 17, 2023. The SEOC returned to steady state at 1700 hours on July 17, 2023, and did not reopen.

The Director was in contact with the appropriate Emergency Support Function (ESF) lead agencies to ensure an adequate and timely response to the needs of our state, should a need have been identified. NH HSEM utilizes WebEOC and an incident was created titled, "2023 – 008 Significant Rain Event July 10-17," to allow state and local agencies to log requests or actions taken as a result of the storm.

A total of 16 communities activated or partially activated their local emergency operations centers to coordinate their response efforts, assess damages, monitor road closures, and respond to emergency calls for service. The longest EOC activation was the Town of Acworth from 1935 hours on July 10, 2023, through the morning hours of July 15, 2023.

Over 20 mission task requests were entered into WebEOC due to needs in local communities. These requests varied from the Town of Alton indicating a need of water for a shelter being opened or the Town of Acworth indicating a need of cones, barricades, and signage. The SEOC Mission Task Coordinator handled these requests with the appropriate ESFs.

Power outages were monitored and were minimal. Shortly after activation on July 10, 2023, there were approximately 200 outages. There was a peak of outages on July 16, 2023, though still a small amount of less than 7,500 across all four energy providers.

Before and after the SEOC activation, the NH HSEM Duty Officer remained on an on-call basis 24/7, to coordinate the needs of local communities during the recovery phase.

On July 13, 2023, NH HSEM issued a [news release](#) advising residents and visitors to prepare for additional flooding. This was the second news release that NH HSEM issued in just four days about flooding concerns in the state.

2. ESFs that were coordinated with during the Activation included: Transportation (ESF 1), Communications & Alerting (ESF 2), Public Works and Engineering (ESF 3), Fire Fighting (ESF 4), Emergency Management (ESF 5), Mass Care, Housing, and Human Services (ESF 6), Health and Medical (ESF 8), Public Safety and Law Enforcement (ESF 13), Volunteer Management (ESF 14) and Public Information (ESF 15).
3. The NH DOT coordinated transportation, public works, and engineering needs across the state. Numerous roads across the state required debris removal and repairs to infrastructure.

The NH DOT Division of Operations Bureau of Transportation Systems, Management & Operations (TSMO) maintains 24/7 staffing to address needs immediately as they arise

within the State. Between the hours of midnight on July 9, 2023, and midnight on July 17, 2023, an average of six staff were on duty in the TSMO each day who answered over 2,500 phone calls and nearly 7,000 radio communications. Two days during the incident period eight staff were utilized. There were an additional six district offices that supported the operations throughout the event, which their data is not represented within the previous information.

In total, nearly 250 roads were logged in WebEOC as having been impacted during the incident period. The road closure board in WebEOC documents impacts to both local and state roadways and is monitored by the NHTSMO and the SEOC. At the height of the incident period, there were almost 100 full road closures, 26 partial road closures, and 23 roadways with restrictions.

4. The NH Department of Environmental Services (DES) monitored and coordinated response to storm impacts to rivers, dams, and public drinking water supply. DES was available for dam inspections and additional monitoring of streams, as the need arose following flash flooding and washouts.

On July 14, 2023, DES issued a news release bringing attention elevated bacteria levels in lakes and rivers, cyanobacteria blooms, concerns with drinking water wells and septic systems, and other post-flooding considerations such as obtaining authorizations for emergency wetland repairs.

DES Water Division – Dam Bureau provided information that monitored lake levels throughout the incident period at Winnepesaukee, Winnisquam, Ossipee, Newfound, Mascoma and Sunapee lakes and indicated they were all above full levels. Due to the already high-water levels from rainfall during the first week of July dam levels already dangerously high at the start of the incident period. Response to requests for direct support were done at the following locations: Forest Lake Dam - Winchester (Cheshire County), Swanzey Lake Dam - Swanzey (Cheshire County), Granite Lake Dam - Nelson (Cheshire County), Highland Lake Dam - Stoddard (Cheshire County), Island Pond Dam - Stoddard (Cheshire County), Kilton Pond Dam - Grafton (Grafton County), Bellow Falls Dam - Walpole (Cheshire County), Mascoma Lake Dam - Lebanon (Grafton County), Copps Pond Dam - Tuftonboro (Carroll County), and Evas Marsh Dam - Hancock (Hillsborough County).

Several dam sites required emergency protective measures such as sandbagging or even removal of a temporary cofferdam, which prevented uncontrolled releases and mitigated further impacts downstream. A dam failure was recorded in the Town of Winchester, which resulted in significant damages to the community.

5. From July 9 to July 17, 2023, the Department of Safety, Division of Emergency Services and Communications (DESC) answered 14,215 calls to 911 which is a 15% increase from last year. Extreme call volume days were recorded as July 11, 13, 15, and 17 where more than 1,6000 calls were answered in a single day. July 2023 is now recorded as the single

busiest month of record for DESC. Increased staffing was utilized to respond to the uptick in calls.

6. A shelter was opened in the Town of Alton (Carroll County) and support was requested from Winnipesaukee Public Health Network through ESF 6. The Town was able to provide a way for the one resident at the shelter to safely re-enter their residence so the shelter was able to be closed the same day. It is presumed that other shelters were opened but were not recorded in WebEOC such as the one in the Town of Unity.
7. The American Red Cross was prepared to provide support and resources for unmet sheltering needs within the state, should the need have arisen.

The State of New Hampshire continues to manage the recovery efforts for disasters, straining state, and local resources. The following is list of active disasters that the State of New Hampshire continues to work toward close out: FEMA-4329-DR (July 1, 2017-July 2, 2017, Severe Storm and Flooding in Coos and Grafton Counties), FEMA-4355-DR (October 29, 2017-November 1, 2017, Severe Storm and Flooding in Belknap, Carroll, Coos, Grafton, Merrimack, and Sullivan Counties), FEMA-4370-DR (March 2, 2018-March 8, 2018, Coastal Storm and Flooding in Rockingham County), FEMA-4457-DR (July 11, 2019-July 12, 2019, Severe Storm and Flooding in Grafton County), FEMA-4516-DR (January 20, 2020-May 11, 2023, COVID-19 statewide), FEMA-4622-DR (July 17, 2021-July 19, 2021, Severe Storm and Flooding in Cheshire County), FEMA-4624-DR (July 29, 2021-August 2, 2021, Severe Storm and Flooding in Cheshire and Sullivan Counties), and FEMA-4693-DR (December 22, 2022-December 25, 2022, Severe Storm and Flooding in Belknap, Carroll, Coos, and Grafton Counties).

Aside from the already declared disasters, calendar year 2023 has been an extremely impactful year on state and local resources due to serious weather. The State of New Hampshire submitted a disaster declaration for eight Counties due to a severe winter storm and snowstorm that impacted communities from March 13-15. At the initial conclusion of Joint PDAs more than \$2,649,138 in damages were validated by FEMA. We unfortunately received your denial for this major disaster declaration request.

On July 28, 2023, I submitted a major disaster declaration request due to severe storm and flooding that impacted communities on April 30-May 1, 2023. Though we did not exceed the Statewide indicator the local impacts in communities especially within Carroll County were substantial. The Town of Ossipee (Carroll County) had a total of \$1,188,207 in validated damages, \$271.78 per capita and the Town of Madison had a total of \$116,215 in validated damages, \$45.31 per capita. This is significant considering these communities were impacted again this major disaster declaration request. A determination on this major disaster declaration request is still pending.

The impacts from the July 9-July 17, 2023, severe storm and flooding could have been more severe if mitigation work was not previously accomplished. The State of New Hampshire, in collaboration with the FEMA, has had progressing success in making use of available funds via Section 404 mitigation programs. Since Tropical Storm Irene (August 28, 2011), the State of New Hampshire has utilized over \$17,400,000.00 in Section 404 funding toward mitigation projects throughout the State.

Several infrastructure projects have been funded through Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) programs and Hazard Mitigation Grant Programs (HMGP) have increased the resiliency of the towns in the most impacted areas within this incident period. For example, the Town of Marlow, which has three successful mitigation efforts, reported \$30,000 in damages during the initial damage assessments. This is significant compared to its bordering towns of Lempster, Washington, Alstead, and Acworth who are claiming a combined \$2.44 million in damages with additional costs anticipated that were not documented in the Joint PDA process. This is one of potentially several different examples that could be demonstrated.

Through the FEMA Public Assistance Program, the State encourages communities to participate in Section 406 mitigation programs. Since 2011, more than \$1.75 million have been obligated through the Section 406 mitigation program. Mitigation continues to be an important conversation that takes place with communities early in the recovery process.

Given the severity and magnitude of this natural disaster and the events that have transpired from the July 9-July 17, 2023, incident and since then, Federal assistance is necessary to supplement the efforts and available resources of the state and local governments to recover from disaster related losses. Additionally, as required by 44 CFR § 206.36 (c)(5), I certify that all state and local government obligations and expenditures for the current disaster will comply with all applicable cost sharing requirements of the Stafford Act.

For New Hampshire local jurisdictions, the greatest remaining unmet recovery need associated with this severe storm and flooding is financial assistance to help avoid economic shock to businesses and families through local property taxes. Without federal assistance the ability of the communities within the State of New Hampshire to recover in a timely manner and avoiding long-term economic damage is severely hindered.

Thank you for your consideration of this Major Disaster Declaration Request. I look forward to your response. Please do not hesitate to contact me or my staff with any questions.

Sincerely,



Christopher T. Sununu
Governor

Enclosures: OMB No. 1660-0009/FEMA Form 010-0-13
B: Estimated Stafford Act Requirements for Public Assistance
C: Estimated Assistance from Other Federal Agency Programs
National Weather Service, Weather Impact Summary