



*State of West Virginia*  
*Earl Ray Tomblin*  
*Governor*

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July 27, 2015

The Honorable Barack Obama  
President of the United States  
The White House  
Washington, D. C.

Through: Regional Administrator MaryAnn Tierney  
FEMA Region III  
One Independence Mall, Sixth Floor  
615 Chestnut Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19106-4404

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 request that you declare a major disaster for the State of West Virginia for the severe storms that caused flooding, landslides, mudslides and wind damage in eight (8) counties beginning July 11, 2015 and concluding July 14, 2015.

This marks the fifth major disaster to strike the state in 2015. The first was declared on March 31, and provided for Public Assistance support to thirty-two (32) counties including six (6) in this request. From April 3-5, West Virginia was impacted by storms that caused such extensive damage in the southwestern portion of the state that I requested a Major Disaster Declaration for both Individual and Public Assistance to assist our recovery from that disaster. The third event, April 8-11, for which I requested a Major Disaster Declaration on May 7, caused major damage in the northwestern portion of the state. Lastly, on May 11, I requested a fourth Major Disaster Declaration for a disaster that caused extensive damage in several counties of the state. It is expected that the non-federal share of these four (4) disasters will be at least \$17,000,000.

Fortunately, this most recent disaster did not result in any reported injuries or deaths. Specifically, in the Mineral Wells area of Wood County, the heroic activities of local first responders prevented a very dangerous situation from becoming a truly tragic one. It has been reported that some residents, including some with special needs, were literally taken off the

rooftop of the building where they had gone to escape the rushing water, and one person was rescued from the waters after they were swept away by the flooding stream.

I must note that the state has very saturated soil conditions from nearly daily rainfall beginning in the spring and continuing through this point in the summer. There have been numerous severe storms, flash flooding, and tornado watches and warnings posted for various areas of the state during this time period.

Beginning on July 10, another round of heavy rain began to fall in portions of the state that caused damage to roads and other infrastructure. The storms continued the next several days and caused severe flash flooding in several counties. Wood County was the center of the damage to individuals and households because of the extremely high water level along Little Tygart Creek in the Mineral Wells community. The flood level, which exceeded the established 100-year flood level, caused devastation to a twenty-four (24) unit multi-family building, manufactured homes in a nearby mobile home park, and several single family homes. Further, Braxton and Lincoln Counties also had very significant damage to individuals and households. The Preliminary Damage Assessment teams determined that one hundred eighty (180) homes were damaged in these three (3) counties with nineteen (19) considered destroyed and fifty-one (51) believed to have major damage. The latter figure includes all twenty-four (24) units of a multi-family unit that receives United States Department of Agriculture assistance for its residents. In addition, there were at least nineteen (19) private water crossings lost in Braxton and Lincoln Counties.

Although these three (3) counties bore the brunt of the damage to individuals and households, residents in several other counties suffered damage to their dwellings as well as loss of private water crossings. At this time, we are requesting individual assistance for the three (3) counties with the most concentrated identified losses, but I reserve the right to request similar assistance for those affected in other counties as additional information becomes available.

The response of the voluntary organizations to this new disaster has once again been extraordinary. The members of the West Virginia Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (WVVOAD) provided a shelter in Wood County, rental hotel rooms for several families for several nights, over 800 meals, and over 1,200 snacks, assistance with mucking out homes, spiritual care, and damage assessments, as well as supplying hundreds of clean-up kits, sixty (60) hygiene kits, sixty (60) baby kits, fifty (50) child activity kits, a tool trailer, a shower trailer, miscellaneous clean-up and personal items. The American Red Cross has assisted at least eighty-seven (87) families and opened other cases.

Unfortunately, this disaster follows on the heels of four (4) others this year in addition to smaller events in previous years for which there has been no Stafford Act assistance for individuals and families. Thus, the WVVOAD currently has an active caseload for long term assistance exceeding 500 individuals and households whose needs range from relatively minor repairs to

complete replacement of their homes and/or private water crossings. In the absence of Stafford Act assistance for the survivors of this disaster, this load will increase by nearly 200 families in the affected areas at a time when the resources available to assist those previously damaged had been stretched to their limit.

In addition to the residential damage, which includes private water crossings, the wells that have been contaminated and the crops (including hay, corn and gardens) that have been lost seriously affect the safety and security of those unfortunate enough to have borne the brunt of this disaster.

Thus, I must conclude that only the financial assistance that can be made available through the Stafford Act’s Individuals and Households Program will be sufficient to restore the lives of those affected by this disaster to their pre-disaster condition.

The chart below is included to provide the latest data regarding these areas of concern as required for consideration of this request.

	Average of Persons Below Poverty Level*	Median Household Income*	Percent Elderly*	Percent Disabled**	Percent Pre-Disaster Unemployment***
National Average	15.4%	\$53,046	14.1%	12.1%	5.5%
State/Tribe Average	17.9%	\$41,043	17.3%	19.1%	7.2%
Lincoln	27.3%	\$35,487	16.6%	27.3%	9.9%
Nicholas	19.2%	\$40,064	18.5%	22.4%	9.2%
Wood	16.2%	\$42,287	18.1%	17.6%	6.6%

\* United States Census Bureau Quick Facts

\*\* Disability Characteristics of the 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (U.S. Census)

\*\*\* WorkForce West Virginia

As six (6) of the counties in this request are included in at least one of the previous major disaster declarations this year for infrastructure damage, the teams that conducted the official joint Preliminary Damage Assessments were instructed to make certain the reported damages were related to the July 10-14 event and not the earlier disasters. They determined that the July 10-14 storms caused over \$6,000,000 in new damage to the infrastructure in the eight (8) counties.

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On July 10, 2015, at the first indications of damage, I implemented the State Emergency Operations Plan, and ordered all state agencies to respond to the situation with all available and required resources. As the disaster progressed, I proclaimed a State of Emergency on July 12, 2015, for Braxton, Webster and Wood Counties. This was expanded two days later, July 14, 2015, to include Clay, Lincoln, Logan, Nicholas, Putnam and Roane Counties. I terminated this State of Emergency on July 22, 2015.

The state and local governmental resources as well as the non-governmental resources that have been or will be used to alleviate the conditions of this disaster include:

- Local, state, and volunteer entities immediately responded to the disaster by taking all required steps, including evacuations, water rescues, and tetanus inoculations, to provide for the safety and well-being of the threatened and affected citizens;
- The West Virginia Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management coordinated, under my direction, the State's response to the disaster;
- The Division of Highways immediately responded to maintain highway access by removing debris and implementing emergency protective measures;
- The West Virginia Conservation Agency responded to all requests for stream evaluations; and
- The West Virginia National Guard provided transportation of emergency supplies, including a water buffalo, and inspected damage.

Preliminary Damage Assessments were completed in a timely and thorough manner. There were no access issues in the areas surveyed, but we continue to receive reports of damages from this disaster. Therefore, I reserve the right to request other counties and other forms of federal assistance under the Stafford Act.

In summary, I am requesting all categories of Individual Assistance for Braxton, Lincoln and Wood Counties; all categories of Public Assistance for Braxton, Clay, Lincoln, Logan, Nicholas, Roane, Webster, and Wood Counties; and Hazard Mitigation for the entire state in accordance with the Stafford Act.

This disaster is the result of severe storms, flooding, landslides, mudslides and straight-line winds beginning July 10, 2015, and ending July 14, 2015. Previous weather systems caused four disasters and seemingly continuing storm systems have prevented the ground from drying sufficiently to prevent this fifth disaster. Therefore, even more than for the previous disasters,

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Stafford Act assistance is absolutely essential if the individuals, families, and infrastructure affected by this disaster are to recover in a timely and more resilient manner.

Sincerely,



Earl Ray Tomblin  
Governor

Enclosures:

OMB No. 1660-0009/FEMA Form 010-0-13

A: Individual Assistance

B: Public Assistance

C: Requirements for Other Federal Agency Programs

**REQUEST FOR PRESIDENTIAL DISASTER DECLARATION  
MAJOR DISASTER OR EMERGENCY**

1. Request Date July 24, 2015

**Burden Disclosure Notice**

Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 9 hours per response. The burden estimate includes the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and submitting the form. This collection of information is required to obtain a benefit. You are not required to respond to this collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. Send comments regarding the accuracy of the burden estimate and any suggestions for reducing the burden to: Information Collections Management, Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency, 500 C Street SW, Washington, DC 20472, Paperwork Reduction Project (1660-0009). **NOTE: Do not send your completed form to this address.**

Completion of this form including applicable attachments satisfies legal requirements for emergency and major disaster declaration requests under 42 U.S.C. §§ 5170 and 5191, respectively, as implemented at 44 C.F.R. §§ 206.35 and 206.36. Failure to use this form may result in a failure to meet these requirements and/or a delay in processing the request.

2a. Name of State (as defined in Stafford Act 102, 42 U.S.C. § 5122) or Indian tribal government requesting declaration.  West Virginia	2b. Population (as reported by 2010 Census) or estimated population of Indian tribal government's damaged area(s).  1,852,994
3. Governor's or Tribal Chief Executive's Name  Earl Ray Tomblin	4. Designation of State or Tribal Coordinating Officer upon declaration (if available) and phone number  Jimmy J. Gianato (304) 558-5380

5. Designation of Governor's Authorized Representative or Tribal Chief Executive Representative upon declaration (if available) and phone number  
 Jimmy J. Gianato (304) 558-5380

6. Declaration Request For:  Major Disaster (Stafford Act Sec. 401)  Emergency (Stafford Act Sec. 501(a))

7. Incident Period: Beginning Date July 10, 2015 End Date July 14, 2015 or  Continuing *If requesting a "continuing" incident period, enclose an official statement from a qualified Federal Government agency acknowledged as a national authority in a specific incident field (e.g., United States Geological Survey for seismic incidents, the National Weather Service for flooding).*

7b. Type of Incident (Check all that apply)

Drought  Earthquake  Explosion  Fire  Flood  Hurricane  Landslide  Mudslide  
 Severe Storm (rain, high water, wind-driven rain, hail, lighting)  Snowstorm (Must include Enclosure D: Historic and Current Snowfall Data)  Straight-Line Winds  
 Tidal Wave  Tornado  Tropical Depression  Tropical Storm  Tsunami  Volcanic Eruption  Winter Storm  
 Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

8. Description of damages (Short description of impacts of disaster on affected area and population). Include additional details in enclosed Governor's or Tribal Chief Executive's cover letter.  
 Beginning July 10, 2015, severe weather caused flash flooding, wind damage and embankment failures across several counties of West Virginia. These storms caused severe damage to private property and the transportation infrastructure of the affected areas by triggering embankment failures and washing out portions of the roads as well as stream crossings. In addition, a hospital received major damage when water flowed into its basement to a reported depth of four (4) feet. The most severe impact is in the Mineral Wells community of Wood County where over fifty (50) housing units were identified as either destroyed or with major damage. Braxton and Lincoln Counties also suffered severe damage to individuals and households. Our joint assessment of damage indicates that this new sequence of destruction was in addition to those that have resulted in four (4) previous major disaster declarations this calendar year.

9. Description of the nature and amount of State and local or Indian tribal government resources which have been or will be committed. Include additional details in enclosed Governor's or Tribal Chief Executive's cover letter.  
 Local agencies responded immediately to the incidents and performed water rescues of people either stranded or swept away by the flash flooding. In addition, they have assisted the survivors to the extent permitted by their resources.  
 All required resources of the state were activated to respond to this disaster. Under my direction, the Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Management coordinated the state's response which included the Division of Highways clearing and reopening roads, the West Virginia Conservation Agency inspecting affected streams for blockages that could cause additional flooding, the Department of Health and Human Resources providing outreach services to determine support that could be provided through their programs, the National Guard providing transportation of emergency supplies and all agencies making sure they were functioning following the event and utilizing their regular programs to assist those in need.

10. Joint Preliminary Damage Assessment\*

Individual Assistance      Dates Performed      Requested July 14, 2015      Start July 17, 2015      End July 20, 2015

Individual Assistance Accessibility Problems (Areas that could not be accessed, and why)

Public Assistance      Dates Performed      Requested July 14, 2015      Start July 17, 2015      End July 21, 2015

Public Assistance Accessibility Problems (Areas that could not be accessed, and why)  
None

11. Programs and Areas Requested

Individual Assistance     N/A     Individuals and Households Program     Crisis Counseling Program     Disaster Unemployment Assistance  
 All     Disaster Case Management     Disaster Legal Services

For the following jurisdictions, specify programs and areas (counties, parishes, independent cities; for Indian tribal government, list tribe(s) and/or tribal area(s)) If additional space is needed, please enclose additional documentation).

Braxton, Lincoln, and Wood Counties for all forms of Individual Assistance.

For States, identify Federally-recognized Tribes in the requested counties (if applicable).

Please see Enclosure A: Supplemental Information for Individual Assistance for additional information in support of this request\*.

\*Not Required for Emergency Declaration Request

11. Programs and Areas Requested (Continued)

Public Assistance     N/A     Debris Removal (Category A)     Emergency Protective Measures (Category B)     Permanent Work (Categories C-G)\*  
(not available for Emergency Declaration Requests)

For the following jurisdictions, specify programs and areas (counties, parishes, independent cities; for Indian tribal government, list tribe(s) and/or tribal area(s)). If additional space is needed or your request includes different categories of work for different jurisdictions; please enclose additional documentation.

Braxton, Clay, Lincoln, Logan, Nicholas, Roane, Webster and Wood Counties.

For States, identify Federally-recognized Tribes included in the requested counties (if applicable).

N/A

Please see **Enclosure B: Supplemental Information for Public Assistance** for additional information in support of this request\*.

**Indemnification for Debris Removal Activity**

I do not anticipate the need for debris removal.

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

**Request for Direct Federal Assistance**

I do not request direct Federal assistance at this time.

I request direct Federal assistance for work and services to save lives and protect property, and:

a. I request the following type(s) of assistance:

b. List of reasons why State and local or Indian tribal government cannot perform, or contract for, required work and services.

c. In accordance with 44 C.F.R. § 206.208, the State or Indian tribal government agrees that it will, with respect to direct Federal assistance: (1) Provide without cost to the United States all lands, easements, and rights-of-ways necessary to accomplish the approved work; (2) Hold and save the United States free from damages due to the requested work, and shall indemnify the Federal Government against any claims arising from such work; (3) Provide reimbursement to FEMA for the non-Federal share of the cost of such work in accordance with the provisions of the FEMA-State or FEMA-Tribe Agreement ; and (4) Assist the performing Federal agency in all support and local jurisdictional matters.

**Request for Snow Assistance**

N/A     I request snow assistance.

Snow assistance for the following jurisdictions (Specify counties, independent cities or tribes and/or tribal areas).

Please see **Enclosure D: Historic and Current Snowfall Data** for additional information in support of this request\*.

\*Not Required for Emergency Declaration Request

11. Programs and Areas Requested (Continued)

Hazard Mitigation\*  Statewide OR

For the following specific counties, parishes, independent cities or tribes and/or tribal areas.

12. Mitigation Plan Information\*

a. Mitigation Plan Expiration Date October 17, 2018 b. Type of Plan  Enhanced  Standard

13. Other Federal Agency Programs

I do not anticipate requirements from Other Federal Agencies  I do anticipate requirements from Other Federal Agencies

Please see **Enclosure C: Requirements for Other Federal Agency Programs** for additional information in support of this request\*.

14. Findings and Certifications

I certify the following:

a. I have determined that this incident is of such severity and magnitude that effective response is beyond the capabilities of the State and the affected local government or Indian tribal government and that supplementary federal assistance is necessary.

b. In response to this incident, I have taken appropriate action under State or tribal law and have directed the execution of the State or Tribal Emergency Plan on July 10, 2015 in accordance with the Stafford Act.

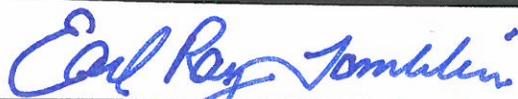
c. The State and local governments, or Indian tribal government will assume all applicable non-Federal share of costs required by the Stafford Act.

15. List of Enclosures and Supporting Documentation

Cover Letter  Enclosure A (Individual Assistance)\*  Enclosure B (Public Assistance)\*

Enclosure C (Requirements for Other Federal Agency Programs)  Enclosure D (Historic and Current Snowfall Data)

Additional Supporting Documentation \_\_\_\_\_

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Governor's or Tribal Chief Executive's Signature

7/27/15  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

If anyone except the Governor or Tribal Chief Executive signs this document, please provide the documentation that establishes that this individual has the legal authority to act on behalf of the Governor or Tribal Chief Executive.

\*Not Required for Emergency Declaration Request

**ENCLOSURE A TO MAJOR DISASTER REQUEST**

Estimated Requirements for Individual Assistance  
under the Stafford Act

County  (List each requested county)	Assistance to Individuals and Households					Other Programs
	Temporary Housing  (Indicate No.)	Repairs	Replacement	Permanent Housing Construction	Other Needs Assistance	(Disaster Unemployment Assistance, Legal Services, and Crisis Counseling)
Braxton	2	(25) \$375,000	0	0	(24) \$80,000	\$50,000
Lincoln	3	(30) \$550,000	0	0	(25) \$95,000	\$50,000
Wood	43	(26) \$260,000	(19) \$300,000	0	(45) \$210,000	\$40,000
<b>TOTALS</b>	48	(81) \$1,185,000	(19) \$300,000	0	(94) \$385,000	\$140,000*

\*The primary need appears to be for Crisis Counseling Assistance.

**ENCLOSURE B TO MAJOR DISASTER REQUEST**

**Estimated Stafford Act Requirements for Public Assistance**

Jurisdiction	Category A Debris Removal	Category B Emergency Protective Measures	Category C Roads and Bridges	Category D Water Control Facilities	Category E Buildings and Equipment	Category F Utilities	Category G Parks & Recreation	TOTAL	Population	Per/Cap Loss
Braxton	\$ 81,000.00	\$ 3,110.00	\$ 1,868,821.00	\$ -	\$ 7,940.00	\$ 46,394.00	\$ -	\$ 2,007,265.00	14,523	\$ 138.21
Clay	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 822,415.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 838,415.00	9,386	\$ 89.33
Lincoln	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 3,174.00	\$ 429,341.00	\$ -	\$ 46,900.00	\$ -	\$ 13,848.00	\$ 494,513.00	21,720	\$ 22.77
Logan	\$ 62,000.01	\$ -	\$ 513,055.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 575,055.01	36,743	\$ 15.65
Nicholas	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 274,995.91	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 6,000.00	\$ -	\$ 284,995.91	26,233	\$ 10.86
Roane	\$ 100,000.01	\$ -	\$ 492,466.50	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 592,466.51	14,926	\$ 39.69
Webster	\$ -	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 423,700.00	\$ -	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 77,000.00	\$ -	\$ 528,700.00	9,154	\$ 57.76
Wood	\$ 85,000.00	\$ 63,490.00	\$ 420,958.31	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 309,233.00	\$ -	\$ 878,681.31	89,956	\$ 10.10
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$ 337,750.02</b>	<b>\$ 84,274.00</b>	<b>\$ 5,245,752.72</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 79,840.00</b>	<b>\$ 438,627.00</b>	<b>\$ 13,848.00</b>	<b>\$ 6,200,091.74</b>	<b>1,852,994</b>	<b>\$ 3.35</b>

ENCLOSURE C TO MAJOR DISASTER REQUEST

Estimated Assistance from Other Federal Agency Programs

County	SBA Home Loans	SBA Business Loans	FSA Loans	NRCS	FHWA	USACE	BIA	OTHER
Braxton	(18) \$345,000	(3) \$120,000			\$ 100,000			
Clay					\$ 60,000			
Lincoln	(16) \$325,000	(1) \$81,000			\$ 30,000			
Logan					\$ 48,460			
Nicholas					\$ 348,000			
Webster					\$ 984,900			
Wood	(45) \$360,000	(3) \$34,000			\$ 175,000			
Total	(79) \$1,300,000	(7) \$235,000			\$1,746,360			