



SCOTT WALKER

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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Governor Walker Requests Federal Disaster Aid for Northern Wisconsin Due to July Flooding

Governor Walker to visit the area again on Friday

Madison—Governor Scott Walker today sent a letter to President Barack Obama requesting a federal disaster declaration for 9 northern Wisconsin counties and the tribal nation of Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa after torrential rains and flash floods last month caused more than \$25 million in damage to roads and public infrastructure. The request is for federal assistance to help local governments recover from the disaster.

"Three weeks ago, flash floods devastated Saxon Harbor in Iron County, damaged and forced the closure of hundreds of roads across the northwest, and flooded numerous homes and businesses," Governor Walker said. "Local and tribal officials are working hard to repair the damage, but the financial impact is a huge burden on many of these towns, villages, and counties. I'm hopeful that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) will approve much-needed disaster assistance to help these communities recover."

Governor Walker requested federal disaster assistance for Ashland, Bayfield, Burnett, Douglas, Florence, Iron, Price, Sawyer, and Washburn Counties, and the Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Tribe. Last week, FEMA, Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, and Wisconsin Emergency Management conducted damage assessments across the impacted areas with local and tribal officials.

The Public Assistance Program would help communities recover some of the costs incurred through fighting the floods, protecting citizens, removing debris, and repairing roads and other infrastructure. The program is not for businesses or homeowners as the level of damage in these areas, unfortunately, does not currently meet requirements for federal relief.

Beginning on July 11, 2016, strong thunderstorms moved across the region producing heavy rains, damaging winds, and hail that caused flash flooding that damaged roads and bridges, washed out culverts, and caused extensive damage to Saxon Harbor. Several boats and vehicles sank and were eventually retrieved from the harbor as a result of the flooding.

If the federal declaration is approved, FEMA provides 75 percent of eligible costs. The State of Wisconsin and local communities impacted share the remaining 25 percent.

Governor Walker will visit the area on Friday to meet with local residents and highlight the fact that, despite the damage, these 9 northern Wisconsin counties remain “Open for Business” during the busy summer tourism season. Friday’s visit to the affected area comes after the governor’s initial July 12 visit to survey the storm damage and his July 25 meetings in Ashland and Hayward with county and local officials, first responders, and charitable organizations from across northern Wisconsin.

Attached is Governor Walker’s letter to President Obama.

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