



# Tony Evers

Office of the Governor | State of Wisconsin

August 19, 2019

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

Through: Regional Administrator James K. Joseph  
FEMA Region V  
536 South Clark Street, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Chicago, IL 60605-1521

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 Wisconsin as a result of severe storms, flooding, straight-line winds, and tornadoes that occurred July 18-20, 2019. This request includes Barron, Clark, Forest, La Crosse, Langlade, Marinette, Menominee, Monroe, Oconto, Oneida, Outagamie, Polk, Portage, Rusk, Shawano, Vernon, Waupaca, and Wood counties; and the Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin and the St. Croix Chippewa Indians of Wisconsin for Public Assistance.

## Event Summary

A warm, humid air mass, combined with a frontal boundary created prime conditions for two-and-a-half days of extremely severe weather in Wisconsin from Thursday, July 18 through Saturday, July 20, 2019.<sup>i</sup> During this time, the northern half of the state was impacted by an intense weather system which produced three lines of severe storms in succession. These storms resulted in 17 confirmed tornadoes, severe straight-line winds, large hail, and heavy rains.<sup>ii</sup>

From the evening of July 18 through the morning hours of July 19, strong severe storms developed across parts of southeast Minnesota and western Wisconsin. The slow-moving storms produced at least one tornado in Vernon County and torrential rain.<sup>iii</sup> Flash flooding, with four to six inches of rain falling across La Crosse, Vernon, and Monroe counties, led to mudslides, damaged roads, and rapid rises in area rivers.<sup>iv</sup>

Because of the warm, humid air in place across Wisconsin following the initial line of storms, additional storm lines followed, developing over western Wisconsin.<sup>v</sup> Only hours later in the evening of July 19, a line of severe thunderstorms producing several embedded tornadoes moved across much of central, north-central, and eastern Wisconsin. The worst damage was associated with a macroburst from Oneida County toward the



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southeast, through Langlade and Oconto counties.<sup>vi</sup> This large downburst of straight-line winds and the associated storm system caused widespread tree and power line damage from central Wisconsin to the Lake Michigan shore. Straight-line winds of at least 100 miles per hour snapped or uprooted hundreds of thousands of trees, resulting in extensive damages to homes and cottages in the region.<sup>vii</sup>

Another line of severe thunderstorms moved across the central and east-central portions of Wisconsin again during the late morning and early afternoon hours of July 20. Rain, straight-line winds and six tornadoes uprooted and snapped additional trees. Widespread damages were reported from Wood and Portage counties into the Fox Valley and Lake Michigan shore. With the massive amount of tree debris, the most prevalent damages were to power lines and structures.<sup>viii</sup>

Local government immediately began to respond. Numerous townships, municipalities, and county governments declared States of Emergency. In some areas, like Vernon County, local State of Emergency declarations were signed almost immediately after the storm hit.<sup>ix</sup> Those local governments quickly notified the State through its Wisconsin Emergency Management Duty Officer System.<sup>x</sup> Others were so overwhelmed by damages and had such limited communication capability after the storms, that they could not notify the state until July 21.<sup>xi</sup> Upon hearing the reports of damages, the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) was activated on Sunday, July 21, 2019.<sup>xii</sup>

In response to the situation, I took appropriate action under state law and directed the execution of the State Emergency Plan on July 21, 2019, in accordance with Section 401 of the Stafford Act, and issued Executive Order #35 on July 21, 2019, proclaiming that a State of Emergency existed statewide. In this Order, I directed all state agencies to assist as appropriate to support response and recovery efforts statewide.

Tragically, this event included the loss of two lives in Oconto County. An individual was killed during storm debris cleanup activities on July 19<sup>th</sup> when the individual was attempting to remove a fallen tree with a chain attached to a four-wheeler. The chain broke causing the tree to break free and strike the individual in the head.<sup>xiii</sup> A second individual passed away two days after he fell from a boom bucket while cleaning up a property in the town of Brazeau.<sup>xiv</sup>

## State Agency Response

The SEOC activated from the afternoon of July 21 through August 8, to coordinate response, fill resource requests to support unmet needs, and jumpstart recovery efforts at the local level. Wisconsin Emergency Management (WEM) coordinated filling requests for assistance, obtaining personnel and equipment, and compiling damage assessment information from local assessment teams. WEM's Region Directors deployed to the hardest-hit counties to assist and support county emergency management directors and elected officials. Field teams that included Region Directors, county emergency management officials, law enforcement, and state agency field staff relayed information to the SEOC and played a significant role in allocating vital state assets to the areas that needed them. Public works and highway crews conducted damage assessments and



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worked to maintain essential services. Local emergency responders and public works crews cleared debris from roadways, and established emergency protective measures to prevent loss of life.

WEM's Geographic Information System staff provided up-to-date road closure maps and "Story Maps" with aerial photos. The Wisconsin Department of Military Affairs Public Information Officers shared information with counties and municipalities, monitored media reports, and issued regular press releases and incident reports.

## *State Aviation Assets (Air Coordination Group)*

The Wisconsin Air Operations Branch in the SEOC utilized the Air Coordination Group (ACG) to facilitate the efficient planning and execution of air support to joint, multi-agency response forces in the field. The ACG is comprised of key staff members from the Wisconsin Drone Network, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Civil Air Patrol (CAP), Wisconsin State Patrol (WSP), WEM, and the Wisconsin National Guard (WING). When aviation resources were required to support a multi-agency response, the ACG served as the centralized point of contact for the coordination of all aviation operations involved in the response effort.

The ACG planned and executed a total of six damage assessment missions during the SEOC activation period, consisting of 10 separate flights. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) conducted an additional 29 damage assessment flights during this time. These flights offered situational awareness that was not available from the ground and provided decision-makers information necessary to prioritize the allocation of scarce resources. As a result of these flights, thousands of geo-coded photographs were collected and made available to federal, state, and local officials. State aviation assets from the ACG collected high-resolution photos and videos that supported planning for response and recovery efforts and assisted in presenting more accurate damage assessments to WEM and FEMA.

## *Wisconsin Department of Transportation (DOT)*

The DOT coordinated with the Department of Natural Resources to provide traffic message boards in the most heavily-impacted areas. They continually updated the 511 service that provides information on road conditions, road closures, and recommended detour routes. The DOT also assisted the Wisconsin State Patrol with identifying downed power lines on State and County Highways

## *Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR)*

The DNR deployed its Incident Management Teams which assisted several counties with volunteer management. Teams consisted of Incident Commander, Operations, Logistics, Planning, and Finance. Forestry sawyer teams were deployed to Barron, Langlade, Oconto, Polk, Portage, and Waupaca counties to assist with clearing woody debris. Key personnel assisted in the State Emergency Operations Center. They also launched a webpage providing municipalities, businesses, and property owners information on debris management following the event.



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## *Wisconsin Department of Corrections (DOC)*

The Wisconsin Department of Corrections deployed several 10-person strike teams that consisted of inmates, supervisors, response trailers, chainsaws, a chipper, a tractor, and a three-ton dump truck to conduct debris removal. These teams supplied 250 inmate-days of work during the response period, conducting operations in multiple locations in Barron and Langlade counties that included the townships of Barron, Almina, Turtle Lake, Ainsworth, and Elcho. Key personnel also assisted as agency liaison officers in the State Emergency Operations Center and on scene in the local Incident Command Posts.<sup>xv</sup>

## *Wisconsin Department of Military Affairs (DMA) and Wisconsin National Guard (WING)*

The WING conducted debris removal efforts from July 22 through August 11, 2019, to protect life and property. The WING deployed three separate taskforces to Barron, Polk, and Langlade counties to assist county and municipal governments with clearing debris for emergency access. The WING deployed an additional fourth taskforce to provide mission command, administrative, public affairs, and logistical support to the three taskforces engaged in debris removal in the field.<sup>xvi</sup>

- Taskforce Barron consisted of 42 soldiers and eight airmen from five units: the 173rd Brigade Engineering Battalion, the 132nd Brigade Support Battalion, the 229th Engineer Company, the 128th Air Refueling Wing, and the 115th Fighter Wing. Taskforce Barron cleared eight miles of road and removed 601 dump truck loads of debris from sites in both Polk and Barron counties.
- Taskforce Polk consisted of 29 soldiers and eight airmen from five units: the 173rd Brigade Engineering Battalion, the 1st Battalion, the 128th Infantry, the 229th Engineer Company, the 132nd Brigade Support Battalion, and the 128th Air Refueling Wing. Through their deployment, Taskforce Polk cleared 28 miles of debris and removed 655 dump truck loads from various sites in Polk County.
- Taskforce Langlade consisted of 43 soldiers from seven units: the 229th Engineer Company, the 950th Engineer Company, the 132nd Brigade Support Battalion, the 724th Engineer Battalion, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, and the 157th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade. Taskforce Langlade initially provided water to five distribution points in Langlade County. They commenced debris removal operations on July 26 in Elcho Township in Langlade County. The taskforce cleared nearly 25 miles of township roadways spanning a 128 square mile area. On August 2, WING deployed Taskforce Langlade to join Taskforces Barron and Polk for debris cleanup in the West Central Region, where Taskforce Langlade cleared an additional three miles of roadway and removed numerous loads of debris.
- Taskforce Command and Control Cell worked behind the scenes to provide mission command, administrative, public affairs, and logistical support to the three task forces. They managed local purchases for food, lodging, and maintenance needs. They also informed citizens with stories, photos, and video products. This taskforce coordinated operations with local officials, addressed concerns, and provided updates to affected citizens at various town meetings.

## *Wisconsin Department of Health Services*

The DHS supported the State Emergency Operations Center for the duration of the incident by reaching out to local public health agencies in impacted counties to check for unmet needs; ensuring assisted living and long-



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term care facilities were appropriately monitored; providing guidance to tribal and local public health agencies on food safety; creating a press release template for post storm health and safety tips; giving information on replacement FoodShare benefits made available for persons affected by the severe weather; and gathering data showing an uptick in emergency department visits associated with storm-related health events and chainsaw-related injuries that were reported by emergency departments.<sup>xvii</sup>

The DHS used the ESSENCE system to collect data regarding storm-related health events that could be tied to the July 18-20 storms and extended power outages. ESSENCE (Electronic Surveillance System for the Early Notification of Community-based Epidemics) is a web-based syndromic surveillance system that collects, processes, and analyzes non-traditional data sources, such as chief complaints from hospital emergency departments and triage notes, to identify disease and injury activities in a community. The data can be queried, analyzed, and visualized both temporally and spatially by the end user.

With this information, Wisconsin documented 72 storm-related emergency department visits and 29 probable visits. A large proportion (~67%) of those visits that reported to the emergency department was for non-superficial injuries caused by chainsaw use. Nearly all the health reports presented to the emergency departments were male patients between the ages of 18 and 64.<sup>xviii</sup> It is worth noting that this number is likely an underestimate, since residents tend to under-report health events by seeking treatment in an emergency department.

## **VOAD Response**

Volunteer agencies and mass care partners quickly mobilized to address the needs of hundreds of thousands of residents who were without power for multiple days, some of which remained without power for over a week. The extended power outages not only caused household food spoilage and limited the ability to prepare food, but also impacted many homes' septic systems which rely on electricity to pump water from their private wells. About one-quarter of Wisconsin's population drinks water drawn from over 800,000 private wells.<sup>xix</sup>

In response, the American Red Cross opened 10 reception centers where survivors were able to access meals, snacks, clean water, and shower facilities; charge their devices; and find relief from the hottest temperatures of 2019. 60 Red Cross volunteers and 12 Red Cross employees were involved in this incident. There were at least two other independent reception centers that served similar purposes. One Multi-Agency Resource Center (MARC) was coordinated by the American Red Cross and Oconto County for survivors to receive assistance and information from various agencies and organizations. The MARC was open for two days and served over 100 households. Two teams from HOPE Animal-Assisted Crisis Response deployed to the Oconto County MARC, providing comfort to survivors and entertaining children while their guardians spoke with agency representatives.<sup>xx</sup>

Through these centers and mobile distribution units, the American Red Cross provided 486 meals, 5,096 snacks, and 938 cases of water.<sup>xxi</sup> The Salvation Army also provided mass care support, preparing 2,294 meals and



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providing 490 snacks, and 3,386 beverages to both survivors and emergency relief personnel in the impacted areas.<sup>xxii</sup> Adventist Community Services provided two volunteers to support the non-potable water distribution mission in Langlade County.<sup>xxiii</sup>

Other services provided by the American Red Cross included the following:

- Support of two county emergency operations centers (EOCs) in person with liaisons and two EOCs remotely
- Distribution of 1,477 other supplies (bleach, garbage bags, gloves, shovels, rakes, tarps) to 715 households
- Opening of 29 cases serving 89 individuals
- Distribution of 28 clean up kits, and 24 comfort kits/hygiene items (toothbrush, toothpaste, shampoo, deodorant, razor, tissues, etc.)
- Contact for 31 Disaster Health Services, and nine Disaster Mental Health Services

Additional support from The Salvation Army included:

- Support to 6 households impacted
- 68 volunteers providing 252 hours of service and 16 staff members providing 283 hours of service

While much of the mass care and emergency assistance activities were driven by the extended power outages, survivors directly impacted by the straight-line winds and tornadoes were also quickly overwhelmed by the substantial amount of debris on their private properties, much of it on top of homes and structures. As of August 13, 2-1-1 Wisconsin took 1,416 initial damage report calls on behalf of county emergency management offices and referred survivors to available disaster resources.<sup>xxiv</sup> During these calls 963 survivors asked for their information to be shared with volunteer groups that may be operating in their area. Their work order information was uploaded into the Crisis Cleanup database.<sup>xxv</sup>

Team Rubicon mobilized shortly after the storm to assess damages and began organizing Operation Squire Wood to assist residents of Langlade County with sawyer teams. Operation Squire Wood had 29 Team Rubicon volunteers that completed 31 work orders over 1,692 cumulative hours and removing 1,384 cubic yards of storm debris. This mission saved the community \$49,476.71.<sup>xxvi</sup>

Barron and Polk counties joined the efforts to help survivors clean up their private properties by establishing volunteer reception centers (VRCs) on the weekend of July 26. Barron County, in coordination with the Department of Natural Resources Incident Management Team, processed over 150 volunteers in a two-day period.<sup>xxvii</sup> A total of 213 clean-up work orders were received with 187 completed and the remaining 26 being forwarded to the respective townships for follow-up.

## Electrical Utility Impacts



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Overall, these storms caused some of the worst damage to electric distribution systems throughout the State in decades. Tornadoes and high winds ripped down power poles and knocked trees and branches into homes and power lines. Nearly 300,000 customers of investor-owned utilities and tens-of-thousands of customers of publicly-owned utilities lost power due to the storms, requiring an unprecedented restoration effort.<sup>xxxviii</sup> It was estimated that 500,000 feet of conductors, over 700 poles, 700 crossarms, and nearly 600 transformers required replacement across various privately-owned utility distribution systems in northern and central Wisconsin.<sup>xxxix</sup> On the public side, smaller electrical cooperatives and municipally-owned utilities quickly deployed to the field. Barron Electric Cooperative, which provides power to customers in portions of eight separate counties, experienced outages to over half of their 19,000 members.<sup>xxx</sup>

Due to the widespread damages across both the investor-owned and publicly-owned electrical grids, even with hundreds of line crews and employees, outside assistance was required to restore power to the impacted areas so that Wisconsin residents could focus on clean-up and recovery efforts. Since neighboring utilities were competing for assistance, it took several days to get outside support. By Wednesday, investor-owned utilities had over 1,300 field personnel and contractors engaged in line repairs and tree clearance, with several hundred additional support personnel.<sup>xxxi</sup> This surge in field-deployed experts allowed the outages to shrink to approximately 6,500 by July 25.<sup>xxxii</sup> Smaller publicly-owned utilities, like Polk-Burnett Electric Cooperative in the West Central Region of Wisconsin, were also out in the field immediately to restore power. 9,000 co-op members were without service across their multi-county territory.<sup>xxxiii</sup> Although Polk-Burnett was able to prioritize repairs to transmission lines and substations and restore service to 5,000 members within twelve hours of the storms, it took until the end of the week to restore power to the remaining members.<sup>xxxiv</sup> This effort was completed with the help of 11 neighboring electrical cooperatives and three additional contractors to assist with tree clearing and line construction.<sup>xxxv</sup>

Although many Wisconsinites in the impacted area receive electric power from private investor-owned utilities, residents in many rural communities rely on member-owned electrical cooperatives to power their homes, businesses, and farms. These communities will be significantly impacted by the additional unexpected costs required to make these essential and timely repairs. In rural areas, like those impacted by this storm, there exists an especially strong "connection between economic productivity and electric power, and reducing power outage frequency and duration translates into economic gains in the community."<sup>xxxvi</sup> The most basic provision of power to rural economies enables farms to operate, improves the quality of rural housing, and attracts businesses to the areas they serve to provide employment opportunities and grow the rural tax base.<sup>xxxvii</sup> These economic gains go above and beyond simply providing critical infrastructure and energy to rural communities. Whenever possible, publicly-owned cooperatives donate to and sponsor local events, charities, community projects, scholarships, and youth activities/education, and lend millions of dollars to expand business opportunities in rural Wisconsin.<sup>xxxviii</sup> When rural electrical distribution systems are damaged, utilities must divert this community investment into repairing critical infrastructure that keeps the lights on in Wisconsin. Without financial assistance to these cooperatives eligible for Public Assistance, recovery efforts will exacerbate already challenging economic conditions for the impacted areas.



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## Wind Damage in Northeastern Wisconsin

*Forest County, Langlade County, Marinette County, Menominee County, Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin, Oconto County, and Oneida County*

Much of northeastern Wisconsin is covered by scenic forested lands; in fact, over 500,000 acres of the disaster-impacted land cover in northeastern Wisconsin is forested and managed by county forestry departments.<sup>xxxix</sup> The densely forested landscape caused immense debris management challenges, as this area experienced the most intense winds in the storm systems, including some areas with straight-line winds of up to 100 miles per hour associated with the macroburst in Oneida, Langlade, and Oconto counties.<sup>xl</sup> Thick, dense, heavy tree debris covered most roads in many rural townships, including the towns of Elcho, Ainsworth, Langlade, and Wolf River in Langlade County, the Town of Nashville in Forest County, and the towns of Enterprise and Schoepke in Oneida County.

Damages to communications and utilities tested regional emergency response capabilities. Public safety buildings, such as the Forest County Sheriff's Office, were without power, relying on generator backup power to remain operational throughout the response.<sup>xli</sup> Residents immediately began calling 9-1-1 to request assistance with cell phones where service was still available. As reported by the Menominee Tribe, many members were unable to effectively communicate due to the lack of backup power at certain cellular tower sites that serve its community.<sup>xlii</sup> In Forest County, backup generators powered communications towers.<sup>xliii</sup> Another communications tower in the Town of Pound (Marinette County) was rendered inoperable due to failure of its backup generator, impacting residents' ability to request assistance.<sup>xliv</sup> To provide coverage to residents, 9-1-1 calls were rerouted to Oconto County, where additional Marinette County dispatchers were requested to assist with the large call volume.<sup>xlv</sup> Menominee County also brought in additional staff on overtime to handle calls in a timely manner.<sup>xlvi</sup> The Menominee Tribal Clinic operated on backup generator power so that the Menominee Tribal Rescue Service could continue operations to the Menominee Tribe.<sup>xlvii</sup> Menominee County, the Menominee Tribe, and Langlade County were among the first counties in the state to open local Emergency Operations Centers to help coordinate the response and recovery.<sup>xlviii</sup>

Residents in the area inundated dispatch with calls to ambulance and fire service personnel, especially in Marinette and Langlade counties. Marinette County received many calls from individuals with medical oxygen tanks and those on insulin, requiring refrigeration.<sup>xlix</sup> Emergency services to residents who were elderly or had access and functional needs were in high demand. For instance, when oxygen tanks were running low, ambulances could not swap out tanks and there was no power source to regenerate tanks on-site, so responders had to transport residents to emergency rooms.<sup>l</sup> Neighboring Langlade County also received similar requests for help changing oxygen tanks, on top of their duty to complete welfare checks for isolated residents and provide food and water door-to-door.<sup>li</sup> Langlade County credits its ability to request assistance through the Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS) in helping backfill the various volunteer fire and ambulance service providers to meet the surge of requests. Even with additional help, many elderly residents needed emergency transportation to the hospital, which was also seeing an increase in chainsaw-related



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incidents from residents attempting to remove debris.<sup>lii</sup> Menominee County and Menominee Tribal personnel worked together to open reception centers, assist residents at centers, and perform welfare checks on County Human Services clients throughout the storms and the aftermath.<sup>liii</sup> County and Tribal firefighters, staff, community members, and local organizations worked closely to provide water, food, and other services via delivery and three fixed and one mobile feeding sites that were open during the event.<sup>liv</sup>

Providing emergency and non-emergency services was especially difficult due to the large amounts of debris covering much of the road infrastructure in these five counties. Since many community members rely on cell phones for communication, their ability to communicate was severely impacted without the ability to re-charge phones.<sup>lv</sup> Many townships across the area started debris clearance right away, working all night and into the next day to make as many main emergency routes passable as possible. New reports continued to come in to county dispatch through Sunday, July 21.<sup>lvi</sup> As emergency management, safety, and public works personnel began assessing damage, widespread large, heavy debris on the roadway needed to be cut to gain access to the most heavily-impacted areas.<sup>lvii</sup> It became apparent that even with the tireless efforts of volunteer fire departments, public works crews, and other emergency responders, outside assistance to remove debris from the road rights-of-way would be required.

In the most intensely-damaged parts of Langlade County where the macroburst flattened hundreds of acres of forest, the Wisconsin National Guard, Wisconsin Department of Corrections, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, and Team Rubicon assisted in cutting down trees and removing the most difficult debris. Even a week after the storm, many roadways were still impassable to all traffic, including emergency vehicles.<sup>lviii</sup> The sheer volume of woody debris has completely overwhelmed the local population's ability to remove and properly dispose of it.

This extraordinarily large amount of debris has devastated the budgets of county, township, and municipal governments with much work yet to be completed. Generally, rural municipalities in the area have only one or two employees to handle public works duties, with some only using part time or seasonal labor. In more localized events, these local governments rely heavily on the various county highway departments to assist with debris removal. County highway departments were equally overwhelmed by work to be done throughout their road systems and could not aid the towns. All governments in the area will continue to compete for the use of heavy equipment and labor to clear road rights-of-way. Some townships in Oneida County were able to hire temporary employees and adjusted the schedules of current employees to ignore other essential work duties to remove the debris; however, this is not a sustainable long-term solution to the problem.<sup>lix</sup> Many communities will struggle to hire new employees who can handle labor-intensive duties required to remove giant trees off roadways, because upwards of 25% of their small populations are over the age of 65.<sup>lx</sup> These townships and municipalities generally lack enough heavy equipment, so much of this work must be contracted out to complete – with such widespread damage, those contractors are also in heavy demand, preventing timely completion of work and increasing concerns over price-gouging.



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The losses to the forestry and agricultural industries are currently unknown. For a region that relies heavily on sustainable management of forests and soils, state, county, and local land managers have a difficult task of removing and rebuilding tree stock. Summer and early fall are the times when visitors flock to this part of the state for recreational amenities, providing the backbones of local economies of communities with small populations. Oconto County estimates that economic losses will total roughly \$250,000 due to the closed recreational trails.<sup>lxi</sup> Without federal financial assistance, it is uncertain how counties like Menominee County with nearly 28% of its population living below the poverty level and over double the national average of unemployment could raise funds to cover debris removal without federal assistance.<sup>lxii</sup> Similarly, 24% of the populations of both Marinette and Langlade counties is over the age of 65, which means roughly one-fourth of the counties' populations live on a fixed income and may struggle to find the means to cover the costs to remove debris and rebuild infrastructure, on top of recovering personal losses.<sup>lxiii</sup>

## Wind Damage in West Central Wisconsin

*Barron County, Clark County, Polk County, Rusk County, and the St. Croix Chippewa Indians of Wisconsin*

The severe weather that impacted the west central region of Wisconsin included straight-line winds, tornadoes, and heavy precipitation. In some areas flooding occurred, and in others, trees were thrown and piled several feet deep. Four separate confirmed tornadoes touched down in this region on July 19.<sup>lxiv</sup> A trained weather-spotter recorded wind gusts of 84 miles per hour.<sup>lxv</sup> In Barron County, 14 separate municipalities, one electric cooperative, and the County declared States of Emergency as a result of the damages sustained and concerns for life safety and response.<sup>lxvi</sup> The Polk County Justice Center, which is home to the 9-1-1 dispatch and Communications Center, ran on generator power for several hours in order to provide emergency services.<sup>lxvii</sup> Coordination of resources and assessment of needs was managed in the local emergency operations centers. Across Barron and Polk counties, multiple fire departments, police departments, and sheriff's office personnel responded to downed power lines. Emergency workers were dispatched to areas throughout the counties to assist with barricading, search and rescue, and debris clearance. In areas that experienced heavy rains and high winds, trees were uprooted and power lines toppled due to the saturated soils. Debris covered and damaged many area roads, causing closures. Roadways were also damaged by rushing water from heavy precipitation, requiring additional closures. Clark County barricaded many of these roadways due to public safety concerns for residents trying to access detours and emergency personnel trying to clear debris and assess damages.<sup>lxviii</sup>

The heavy widespread debris, especially in Barron and Polk counties, has made damage assessment difficult. The Wisconsin DNR estimated that over half of the total 105,000 acres of affected land in Polk County, or 53,000 acres, was classified as woodland.<sup>lxix</sup> A local utility deployed snowplows to clear trees and other debris from highways so emergency responders could reach stranded residents.<sup>lxx</sup> These strategies were imperative to reach several residents in need of oxygen outside of Turtle Lake, according to volunteer responders.<sup>lxxi</sup> Debris was so widespread, that only two days into the incident, Polk County needed to work with the Wisconsin DNR to locate and permit a third debris staging site.<sup>lxxii</sup> Chainsaw



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teams, heavy equipment operators, and labor to remove debris, plus all of the equipment necessary to support the operations were requested as early as the third incident period from the WING, DOC, and DNR to manage requests for assistance to remove debris.<sup>lxxxiii</sup> Since debris cleanup is still ongoing, initial cost estimates prepared for the Preliminary Damage Assessment for public sector impacts do not include full damages, especially from county highway departments, who have much work ahead.

For the St. Croix Chippewa Tribe of Wisconsin, response was especially challenging. The tribe is spread across eleven separate communities scattered over a four-county area in Barron, Burnett, Polk, and Washburn counties. Since most of the tribal offices and services are found in Burnett County, when two of its communities in Polk County, Maple Plain and Round Lake, were hit hard, there was limited access for many of the public services they rely on to respond to the event. In fact, the nearest fire department, comprised of volunteers, is 35-40 minutes away.<sup>lxxxiv</sup> Overall, the Maple Plain and Round Lake communities in Polk County account for about one-third of the population on the St. Croix reservation lands.<sup>lxxxv</sup> When the storm went through Turtle Lake, the St. Croix Tribe's largest casino was forced to evacuate from reported gas leaks.<sup>lxxxvi</sup> The casino's adjacent hotel became a safe haven for residents and visitors, finding shelter in the hotel's generator-powered facility.<sup>lxxxvii</sup> Since Polk County was so overwhelmed with its own response efforts, the St. Croix Tribe reached out to the WING for assistance with damage assessment by July 22.<sup>lxxxviii</sup> Thereafter, several neighboring tribes came for several days to provide assistance with some requests for labor and heavy machinery, but much work remains to be done. Since the neighboring tribes could only help for a few days, the St. Croix Tribe needs federal assistance to contract out much of the remaining work in their heavily-forested lands in these communities.

Overall, the total impact of these storms will not be completely captured for several months as businesses and utilities continue to repair and recover. Most of this region's impacted residents receive electrical service through rural cooperatives. As previously mentioned, the financial impacts to rural co-ops are not limited to costs to repair the infrastructure that serves remote residences and farms; cooperatives' ability to invest in their communities decreases, changing the quality of life and viability of businesses.

Agricultural effects are still being assessed in the west central region. It will be particularly important for both short- and long-term recovery, as agriculture accounts for 9,076, 8,466, and 4,226 jobs in Barron, Clark and Polk counties, respectively.<sup>lxxxix</sup> In Barron County, where 91.3% of all farms are owned by individuals or families, agriculture generates \$2 billion in economic activity and accounts for 30% of all county jobs.<sup>lxxx</sup> Many of these small farms experienced damages to buildings and infrastructure, crops, and livestock. In Polk County, approximately 350 homes were affected, in addition to countless silos, barns, sheds, and accessory buildings.<sup>lxxxi</sup> Crops in many areas were damaged by the primary hazards of the storm (rain and wind) and covered with debris. This impacts harvest and transport of grains this fall, with effects lingering into future growing seasons. In Barron County where poultry, eggs, dairy, and livestock drive the local economy, limited manure storage capacity and inability to spread manure on wet fields covered in debris are extreme challenges for farmers.<sup>lxxxii</sup> Expenses associated with production issues,



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reductions in yields, and added costs to get products to storage or market will intensify impacts. Many commodity markets are at low levels, further devastating already-struggling small, family-owned farms.

According to the Polk County Deputy Sheriff and Interim Emergency Management Director:

Many municipalities do not have the staffing needed to continue the clean-up process. Most do not have the money budgeted to pay for the costs that have been and will continue to be incurred. Right-of-way and ditch line clean-up will continue for several months due to the amount of work that contractors are faced with in so many counties. Much of the work needs to be completed before the county receives snow this fall. Limited resources will make this a difficult time frame to meet.<sup>lxxxiii</sup>

The total impact of this event will not be completely captured for several months as municipal crews continue to remove and dispose of debris. This storm will place a significant strain on annual budgets for years to come.

## Wind Damage in East Central Wisconsin

*Outagamie County, Portage County, Shawano County, Waupaca County, and Wood County*

As the storm system moved across the state toward the east, Wood, Portage, Waupaca and Outagamie counties were hit next, sustaining similar damages to those in the west central region of Wisconsin from wind, tornadoes, and heavy rain. With the widespread power outages, many critical facilities coordinating essential public safety duties were operating on backup generators. The Wood County Courthouse, which houses the dispatch center, relied on generator power for 12 hours, while the Emergency Operations Center conducted the first 15 of its 18-hour initial operational shift using generator power and paper forms to manage the incident.<sup>lxxxiv</sup> Waupaca County Emergency Management and Communications nearly had to evacuate due to generator failure; however, the generator was restored and able to provide backup power for seven hours.<sup>lxxxv</sup> Thankfully, all counties were able to support residents as hundreds of calls poured in to each respective dispatch center due to high requests for law enforcement and emergency response services.

Power outages impacted healthcare services and other critical facilities in the immediate aftermath of the storm. Ascension Hospital in Stevens Point and the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point in Portage County operated on backup power, in addition to the County Annex Building, County Courthouse, and County Sheriff's Office.<sup>lxxxvi</sup> Three separate hospital facilities that are part of ThedaCare's network in Appleton (Outagamie County), New London (Outagamie County), and Waupaca (Waupaca County) operated on generator power from late morning until evening on July 20.<sup>lxxxvii</sup> In Wood County, hospitals utilized generators for power for about twelve hours following the storm.<sup>lxxxviii</sup> Some residents needed assistance recharging medical devices, such as oxygen tanks, wheelchairs, and CPAP machines, while others needed to refrigerate medications. Edgewater Haven Nursing Home, a Wood County-operated facility in Port Edwards, and Edenbrook Nursing Home in Wisconsin Rapids opened their doors to assist with refrigeration, while other shelters opened to enable residents to recharge devices.<sup>lxxxix</sup> Some calls came to Waupaca County from residents who needed assistance cutting or removing trees that were blocking doorways and other exits from their homes.<sup>xc</sup> Fire



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departments attempted to respond to reports of gas leaks resulting from trees falling on meters and intake valves, but emergency services response was largely delayed for many calls during the first 24 hours after the storm due to blocked roads.

This region experienced direct damages to both rural and more urbanized areas. Over fifteen municipalities in Wood County, including the cities of Wisconsin Rapids and Pittsville, sustained damages. Because of the concentration of power outages near businesses, additional police were called in to patrol streets, since alarm systems and safety lighting was not working.<sup>xci</sup> One village-owned wastewater treatment facility reported damages in Portage County and several lift stations in Waupaca County required generators to remain operational.<sup>xcii</sup>

The largest challenge, like in many other parts of the state, will be ongoing removal and disposal efforts for the widespread debris from uprooted trees and toppled utility poles. Since utility lines were so severely tangled in the woody debris, road closures persisted as public works and public safety personnel waited for utility workers remove the danger. It took days for emergency access to be restored in many areas, although full debris clearance has yet to be done in many areas. Until roads could be deemed safe, many municipal and county departments used barricades to protect the public from downed power lines and tree debris blocking routes.

As some county facilities move towards recovery, they are posed with challenges, like rescheduling court cases in Outagamie County, and removing debris from parks and paths that attract visitors in Portage County.<sup>xciii</sup> Impacts will continue to be assessed, such as the economic impact of Wisconsin Rapids Mill closing for an entire shift.

## **Flooding in Western Wisconsin**

*La Crosse County, Monroe County, and Vernon County*

For places like Vernon County, this is the fourth major flooding event to occur since 2016. Because the storm system dumped about six inches of rain in some communities, flash flooding occurred again along the Kickapoo River and Coon Creek.<sup>xciv</sup> Thirty separate road systems, including U.S. Highway 14, were under water, slowing response.<sup>xcv</sup> Some municipalities and townships that just completed permanent work road repairs from damages sustained in September 2018 had the same roads sustain damages yet again. For the villages of Ontario, La Farge, Viola, Readstown, Coon Valley, Hillsboro, and Chaseburg, and townships across the County, local infrastructure repair funding is taxing their borrowing capacity and forcing businesses that just reopened to close their doors once again.

Monroe and La Crosse counties were also hit again for the second consecutive time in less than a year, and fourth time in four years. The ridges and valleys that make this part of the state especially scenic quickly turned into fast-moving mudslides that eroded roadways, embankments, and shoulders.<sup>xcvi</sup> Debris plugged culverts and bridges, causing additional damages in townships that had begun to repair damages from last fall's Presidential Disaster Declaration. In the Town of Portland in Monroe County alone, two bridges, nineteen



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municipal roads and ten culverts were plugged, destroyed, or severely damaged.<sup>xcvii</sup> Many of Portland's residents rely on income earned from family-owned dairy farms and were negatively impacted by these road closures and difficult detours when transporting their milk products. This community was already struggling so much to recover from the failure of three separate dams in the fall 2018 event, that this event will negatively impact already economically depressed farmers.<sup>xcviii</sup>

Response was especially dangerous in the tri-county area. The steep topography contributes to very little warning time for residents to evacuate to safety. Where waters rose especially quickly, first responders could only take extremely long detours along gravel roads, hoping that they would be open along the entire route. In La Crosse County, life-safety swift water rescues were required in the towns of Shelby and Greenfield where roads were completely washed out, making residences inaccessible.<sup>xcix</sup>

Residents and local units of government are becoming increasingly stressed by the economic hardships induced by four disasters in four years that reached the level of a Presidential Disaster Declaration. In Vernon, La Crosse, and Monroe counties, local quarries are running out of materials to repair damaged roadways, shoulders, and other infrastructure.<sup>c</sup> Several road repairs that were recently completed following the 2018 event were washed out again, which will exacerbate an existing shortage of what should be readily-available and reasonably-priced materials as they begin to repair again. Businesses and cultural organizations, such as the Norskedalen Nature & Heritage Center in Washington Township (La Crosse County), sustained significant damages to roads, trails, and bridges.<sup>ci</sup> A La Crosse County-owned business park in the Village of West Salem also suffered flood damages, raising questions about local business ability to bounce back from the event.<sup>cii</sup>

## Economic Impact

### *Tourism*

The impacts to the Wisconsin statewide economy are still unknown as road closures, trail damage, and limited access to popular outdoor recreational areas disrupted normal tourist activities during the peak summer travel season. Downed trees forced partial or complete closures of parks, campgrounds, and trail systems from Polk County to Marinette and Oconto counties. Businesses and public infrastructure experienced structural damage and the loss of perishable products due to extended power outages. In impacted regions, ongoing trail and park closures continue to cause a direct negative impact on business operations in all sectors of the tourism economy including recreation, food and beverage, retail, lodging, and transportation. According to the Wisconsin Department of Tourism, the third quarter (July through September) historically accounts for more than 31% of annual visitor spending, \$4.2 billion in 2018, in Wisconsin making it the most economically significant period of the year for tourism-based businesses and public properties.<sup>ciii</sup> The storms impacted many outdoor recreational assets. This is particularly unfortunate, because the recreation sector surged 8.4% in 2018, which is well above its five-year average of 4.4%.<sup>civ</sup> In other words, outdoor recreation economies were getting greater contributions from visitors, making disruptions and closures even more devastating: communities are losing even more potential revenues than normally expected with this type of event.



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The economic loss to Wisconsin’s tourism industry through damages to public infrastructure and loss of business activity cannot be estimated at this time. The annual economic impact of tourism study commissioned by the Wisconsin Department of Tourism that is released in May of each year will provide an indication of the storm’s impact on individual counties in Wisconsin.

## Forestry

The disaster-impacted areas rely heavily on income from forestry-related activities. County forests are extremely important to Wisconsin's forest products industry and economy. Each year, these lands generate anywhere from \$25 to \$30 million in timber revenues for the counties and towns across the State.<sup>cv</sup>

Approximately 16,000 jobs and \$4.6 billion in forest products production result from the timber harvested from county forests, in addition to recreation and tourism opportunities.<sup>cvi</sup> When you take into account all of the supporting labor involved with trucking, paper production, manufactured building materials, and lumber, the forest industry generates over 60,000 jobs and \$24 billion for Wisconsin’s 29 counties with county-owned forestlands.<sup>cvii</sup>

To help understand the situation, the DNR Division of Forestry conducted aerial assessment of the impacted area after the storms. Using the assessment information, DNR Forestry personnel used the Forestry Inventory and Analysis (FIA) Program 2018 data stumpage rates and volume data from average merchantable bole volume per acre using Langlade, Oconto, Polk, and Barron counties. Although other counties received damage, these counties were selected because they had the greatest number of acres impacted. The value from lost stumpage in DNR, county, and private forests in these four counties is estimated at \$70.9 million, as seen below in **Table 1: Lost Stumpage Value Across the State.**<sup>cviii</sup>

**Table 1: Lost Stumpage Value Across the State**

Ownership	Estimated Acres	Estimated damage value
DNR Owned lands	15,000	\$ 5,115,000
Managed Forest Law (MFL)	54,000	\$ 18,414,000
Other Ownership (PVT)	139,000	\$ 47,399,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>208,000</b>	<b>\$ 70,928,000</b>

Source: Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Division of Forestry, Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) Program, 2018. Submitted to WEM via email on August 16, 2019.

The entire mapped 2019 storm damage area nears the number of annual acres harvested in Wisconsin.<sup>cix</sup> This unprecedented level of damage has great potential income loss for all 13 counties and two tribes that operate non-state forests, as outlined below in **Table 2: County- and Tribal-Owned Forest Acreage.**

**Table 2: County- and Tribal-Owned Forest Acreage**



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County/Tribe Name	# Acres	Source
Forest	14,876	County Forestry Dept.
Langlade	130,002	County Forestry Dept.
Marinette	230,714	Wisconsin DNR
Menominee County and Menominee Nation	230,000	County Forestry Dept.
Oconto	43,345	County Forestry Dept.
Oneida	82,256	Wisconsin DNR
<b>Northeast Total</b>	<b>731,193</b>	
Barron	16,025	Wisconsin DNR
Clark	132,852	Wisconsin DNR
Polk	17,144	Wisconsin DNR
Rusk	89,043	Wisconsin DNR
St. Croix Chippewa	3,000	Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council
<b>West Central Total</b>	<b>258,064</b>	
Wood	37,533	Wisconsin DNR
Monroe	7,153	Wisconsin DNR
Vernon	987	Wisconsin DNR
<b>Remaining Areas</b>	<b>45,673</b>	

Sources: County forestry department websites, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Division of Forestry, Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council. Accessed online on August 15, 2019.

These jurisdictions represent over 1.03 million acres of county forests, which is just under half of the state’s 2.4 million county forest acres.<sup>cx</sup> In Oneida County, the Forestry Department sold an all-time record high of \$1.922 million dollars of timber stumpage in 2017, raising \$419,000 of unencumbered revenue to the County’s general fund.<sup>cx</sup> Langlade County also saw increases in production in 2018, up 20,112 cords of wood and 42,970 board feet of sawlogs cut, scaled, and removed from the county forest, accounting for sales totaling \$2.1 million.<sup>cxii</sup> Oneida and Langlade counties saw the worst winds in the event, some over 100 miles per hour, downing thousands of trees. It is especially disappointing because the “markets for all forest products were somewhat stabilized in 2018” providing “a favorable start” to the 2019 forestry harvest season.<sup>cxiii</sup> With the large influx of downed trees, wood prices are expected to plummet, dropping income from the county forest economy tremendously. This means these additional revenues in county general funds will shrink not only from storm cleanup efforts, but also from lost forestry revenue.



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## Event History from Past 24 Months

Unfortunately, this is not the only recent event to draw on the resources and capacity of the state and its counties. In the previous 24 months, the State of Wisconsin, including many of these same counties, has been impacted by a number of events that have required response by resources from the State and one or more counties.

Beginning on the evening on Thursday, July 19, 2017, multiple rounds of severe thunderstorms impacted much of Wisconsin, hitting southwest and west central Wisconsin particularly hard. A line of thunderstorms moved through parts of the region during the later afternoon and evening of July 19, producing damaging wind gusts over southwest Wisconsin. Many towns were inundated by six to ten inches of rain and many rivers rose to major flood stage. A second line of thunderstorms hit the southernmost counties in the state overnight July 21-22, producing additional flooding in the southwest portion of the state. Wisconsin recorded its wettest year from January through July of 2017, causing stream, riverine, and urban flooding developing faster than normal, resulting in flooded homes and businesses, washouts, and flooding on roadways. I requested and Wisconsin received a Public Assistance Federal Disaster Declaration, DR-4343, for eleven counties in western and southwestern Wisconsin.<sup>cxiv</sup>

On Friday, June 15, 2018, multiple rounds of severe thunderstorms impacted much of Wisconsin, hitting northwest and west central Wisconsin particularly hard. A line of thunderstorms moved through parts of the region during the late afternoon and evening of June 15, producing large hail, damaging winds, and torrential rain over northwest Wisconsin. A second line of thunderstorms hit the northern half of the state during the day on Saturday, June 16, and overnight into Sunday, June 17, producing additional flooding in the northwest portion of the state. Record crests occurred on some rivers in Wisconsin including the Nemadji River at Superior (31.06'), Whittlesy Creek at Ashland (7.52'), the White River at Ashland (9.91'), and the St. Croix River at Danbury (11.66'). The Town of Drummond in Bayfield County received 15.04 inches of rain over those three days. I requested and Wisconsin received a Public Assistance Federal Disaster Declaration, DR-4383, for six counties in west central and northern Wisconsin.<sup>cxv</sup>

On Friday, August 17, 2018, a noted change in weather patterns occurred which marked the beginning of multiple rounds of severe weather and flooding across Wisconsin. Until mid-August, Wisconsin had seen normal to below-normal precipitation for the summer months. Starting on Friday, August 17, a very warm and moist air-mass set up across much of Wisconsin and then persisted through the first week in September. A series of storm systems moving through this pattern cause multiple rounds of severe weather and flooding across portions of Wisconsin and followed it with longer-term river flooding as well. The first of these systems moved through southern Wisconsin on Friday, August 17, and put down a large swath of heavy rainfall. Each event where heavy rain fell helped to set conditions for additional flooding to occur. The most widespread severe weather day was August 28, 2018, when 19 tornadoes and widespread damaging winds of 90-110 mph occurred from central Wisconsin through east central Wisconsin. The last of the series of storm systems came through on Wednesday, September 5, and the last river in southern Wisconsin to recede below major flood



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stage did so on Friday, September 14. Record crests occurred on some rivers in Wisconsin including the Baraboo River at La Valle (25.2') and Reedsburg (21.85'), and the Kickapoo River at Viola (25.7'), Readstown (23.7'), Gays Mills (22.31') and Steuben (20.5'). I requested and Wisconsin Received a Public Assistance Federal Disaster Declaration, DR-4402, for 14 counties in east central, southeast, southwest, and west central regions in Wisconsin. I also requested and received an Individual Assistance Federal Disaster Declaration, DR-4402, for 10 counties in east central, south east, southwest, and west central regions in Wisconsin.<sup>cxvi</sup>

In the past year alone, local applicants reached the damage indicator of \$3.78 per capita on 14 separate occasions, making them eligible to receive assistance from the Wisconsin Disaster Fund to include:

- Flooding in Green, Juneau, Monroe, Pepin, and Sauk counties on July 19, 2017
- Flooding in Douglas County on October 3, 2017
- Coastal flooding in Bayfield County on October 24, 2017
- Flash flooding in Green and Lafayette counties on February 19, 2018
- Flooding in Calumet, Fond du Lac, and Manitowoc counties on May 4, 2018
- Flash flooding in Grant County on June 10, 2018
- Power loss due to ice shove on Washington Island (Town of Washington) in Door County starting on June 15, 2018
- Flooding and severe storms in Clark, Columbia, Marathon, Pepin, Price, Taylor, Washburn, and Waushara counties on June 16, 2018
- Flash flooding in Grant, Iron, and Washburn counties on September 19, 2018
- Flooding in Grant County on October 1, 2018
- Flooding in Adams, Brown, Calumet, Chippewa, Columbia, Dodge, Dunn, Fond du Lac, Grant, Green, Iowa, Kewaunee, La Crosse, Lafayette, Manitowoc, Marathon, Ozaukee, Polk, Portage, Sauk, Trempealeau, Waupaca, and Waushara counties starting on March 13, 2019
- Flooding in Clark, Dunn, Grant, Marathon, Marinette, and Portage counties starting on April 16, 2019
- Flash flooding in Grant County on June 30, 2019

In those events, the State will be assisting county and local governments in recouping some of their costs through the Wisconsin Disaster Fund and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's Disaster Damage Aids program. Current eligible damage requests for the Wisconsin Disaster Fund total close to \$2.7 million, without including the damages from this event. This illustrates the State's commitment to helping those in need, but without the assistance of the federal government it will be very difficult for the citizens of the state to recover and move forward.

## **Preliminary Damage Assessment**

**Polk County** – Verified damages in Polk County currently amount to \$3,668,603.19. Of the eighteen counties, Polk County has reported the highest countywide damage per capita loss at \$82.99.



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- 60% of Polk County damages occurred in Category A, and 39% Category F.
- St. Croix Chippewa Indians of Wisconsin also reported Category B damage.

**Barron County** – Verified damages in Barron County currently amount to \$2,766,904.54, resulting in a high damage indicator of \$60.32.

- 52% of Barron County damages occurred in Category A and 46% in Category F.

**Wood County** – Verified damages in Wood County currently amount to \$3,191,796.93 resulting in a high damage per capita amount of \$42.70.

- 65% of the damages occurred primarily in Category F; additional damages occurred in all categories except D.

**Oconto County** – Verified damages in Oconto County currently amount to \$1,572,167.03 resulting in a high damage per capita amount of \$41.75.

- 84% of the damages occurred in Category A.

**Langlade County** – Verified damages in Langlade County currently amount to \$787,259.56 resulting in a high damage per capita amount of \$39.41.

- 95% of the damages occurred in Category A.

**Portage County** – Verified damages in Portage County currently amount to \$1,938,954.31 resulting in a high damage per capita amount of \$27.69.

- 83% of the damages occurred in Category A.

**Waupaca County** – Verified damages in Waupaca County currently amount to \$1,239,568.85 resulting in a high damage per capita amount of \$23.65.

- 72% of the damages occurred in Category A.

**Menominee County** – Verified damages in Menominee County currently amount to \$77,098.17 resulting in a high damage per capita amount of \$18.22.

- 57% of the damages county-wide occurred in Category F.
- The Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin sustained damages in category A and F equal to 78% of the damages.

**Vernon County** – Verified damages in Vernon County currently amount to \$404,329.61 resulting in a high damage per capita amount of \$13.58.



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- 57% of the damages occurred in Category C.

**Outagamie County** – Verified damages in Outagamie County currently amount to \$1,764,000.69 resulting in a high damage per capita amount of \$9.98.

- 83% of the damages occurred in Category A; additional damages occurred in all categories except D.

**Forest County** – Verified damages in Forest County currently amount to \$69,743.00 resulting in a high damage per capita amount of \$7.50.

- 100% of the damages occurred in Category A.

**Rusk County** – Verified damages in Rusk County currently amount to \$97,793.46 resulting in a high damage per capita amount of \$6.63.

- 71% of the damages occurred in Category F.

**Oneida County** – Verified damages in Oneida County currently amount to \$211,844.09 resulting in a high damage per capita amount of \$5.88.

- 96% of the damages occurred in Category B.

**Shawano County** – Verified damages in Shawano County currently amount to \$242,589.13 resulting in a high damage per capita amount of \$5.78.

- All damages occurred in categories A and F.

**Clark County** – Verified damages in Clark County currently amount to \$151,015.74 resulting in a high damage per capita amount of \$4.35.

- 70% of the damages occurred in Category F.

**La Crosse County** – Verified damages in La Crosse County currently amount to \$484,723.65 resulting in a high damage per capita amount of \$4.23.

- 67% of the damages occurred in Category C and 30% in Category G.

**Monroe County** – Verified damages in Monroe County currently amount to \$170,002.00 resulting in a high damage per capita amount of \$3.81.

- 94% of the damages occurred in Category C.

**Marinette County** – Verified damages in Marinette County currently amount to \$134,364.84 resulting in a damage per capita amount of \$3.22.



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- 54% of the damages occurred in Category A.

On August 2, 2019, I requested a joint federal, state, and local survey of damaged areas. The Preliminary Damage Assessment (PDA) for Public Assistance (PA) was conducted August 13-16, 2019. Teams surveyed damages for PA in Barron, Clark, Forest, La Crosse, Langlade, Marinette, Menominee, Monroe, Oconto, Oneida, Outagamie, Polk, Portage, Rusk, Shawano, Vernon, Waupaca, and Wood counties, and the Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin and the St. Croix Chippewa Indians of Wisconsin. We appreciate the assistance in the assessment process from the three assessment teams, and other personnel and support staff that FEMA provided to conduct the PDAs.

## Public Assistance PDA Results

I request that the Public Assistance program be made available in Barron, Clark, Forest, La Crosse, Langlade, Marinette, Menominee, Monroe, Oconto, Oneida, Outagamie, Polk, Portage, Rusk, Shawano, Vernon, Waupaca, and Wood counties.

I request that the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program be made available statewide. The state has a FEMA-approved Enhanced State Hazard Mitigation Plan.

I certify that for this major disaster, the state and local governments will assume all applicable non-federal shares of costs required by the Stafford Act.

I have designated Dr. Darrell L. Williams as the State Coordinating Officer for this request. He will coordinate with the Federal Emergency Management Agency for damage assessments and may provide further information or justification on my behalf.

In closing, I want to reaffirm the urgency of this request and emphasize the need to assist municipalities, counties, and tribes as quickly as possible so that life can return to normal. I therefore respectfully request that you review this documentation and act quickly to declare a major disaster for the State of Wisconsin.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Tony Evers'.

Tony Evers  
Governor



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

Enclosure B: Public Assistance

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- i National Weather Service Milwaukee-Sullivan Field Office, 2019.
  - ii Ibid. WEM Situation Report 4, July 24, 2019.
  - iii National Weather Service La Crosse Field Office, 2019.
  - iv Ibid.
  - v National Weather Service Milwaukee-Sullivan Field Office, 2019.
  - vi National Weather Service Green Bay Field Office, 2019.
  - vii Ibid.
  - viii Ibid.
  - ix Vernon County Emergency Management, WebEOC on July 19, 2019.
  - x WEM Duty Officer Log, WebEOC on July 19, 2019.
  - xi WEM Situation Report 1, July 21, 2019.
  - xii Ibid.
  - xiii WEM Situation Report 4, July 24, 2019.
  - xiv Open Source Media. Green Bay Press-Gazette, August 8, 2019.
  - xv Wisconsin Department of Corrections, *Disaster Impact Report*, provided to WEM on August 13, 2019.
  - xvi Wisconsin Department of Military Affairs, *Disaster Impact Report*, provided to WEM on August 15, 2019.
  - xvii Department of Health Services incident summary provided to WEM on August 15, 2019.
  - xviii Ibid.
  - xix Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, "Wells," accessed online at on <https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/wells/> August 15, 2019.
  - xx Email from HOPE Animal-Assisted Crisis Response, Laura Fruci.
  - xxi Email from American Red Cross, Disaster Program Manager, Jenny Legaspi.
  - xxii Email from The Salvation Army, Disaster Services Director, Terri Leece.
  - xxiii WIVOAD Coordination Call, Adventist Community Services, Alice Garrett.
  - xxiv E-mail from 2-1-1 Wisconsin, Program Manager, Megan Kenney.
  - xxv Crisis Cleanup Relief Organization Registration, accessed online at [www.crisiscleanup.org](http://www.crisiscleanup.org) on August 15, 2019.
  - xxvi Team Rubicon Facebook Page; E-mail from Team Rubicon Midwest Territory Field Operations Lead, Adam Lemons.
  - xxvii WEM Situation Report 9, July 28, 2019.
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  - xxxii WEM Situation Report 5, July 25, 2019.
  - xxxiii Polk-Burnett Electric Cooperative, Monthly Newsletter, August 7, 2019, accessed online at: <https://www.polkburnett.com/power-restored-9000-members> on August 13, 2019.
  - xxxiv Ibid.
  - xxxv Ibid.



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- xxxvi Wender, "Electricity Use in Rural and Islanded Communities," National Academies Press, 2016, accessed online at <http://www.nap.edu/23539> on August 13, 2019.
- xxxvii Wisconsin Electrical Cooperative Association, "Frequently Asked Questions," accessed online at <https://www.weca.coop/frequently-asked-question> on August 14, 2019.
- xxxviii Ibid.
- xxxix Langlade County Forestry-Recreation-Parks Department, Oneida County Forestry and Outdoor Recreation Department, Marinette County Forestry Department, Oconto County Forestry Department, and Forest County Forestry/Parks Department, accessed through individual websites on August 14, 2019.
- xl National Weather Service Green Bay Field Office, 2019.
- xli Forest County Emergency Management, *Disaster Impact Report*, submitted to WEM on August 12, 2019.
- xliv Menominee Tribal Emergency Management, *Disaster Impact Report*, submitted to WEM on August 8, 2019.
- xliv Forest County Emergency Management.
- xliv Marinette County Emergency Management, *Disaster Impact Report*, submitted to WEM on August 9, 2019.
- xlvi Ibid.
- xlvi Menominee County Emergency Management, *Disaster Impact Report*, submitted to WEM on August 12, 2019.
- xlvi Menominee Tribal Emergency Management.
- xlvi WEM Situation Report 1.
- xlvi Marinette County Emergency Management.
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- liii Menominee Tribal Emergency Management.
- liii Menominee County Emergency Management.
- liii Marinette County Emergency Management.
- liii Oneida County Emergency Management, *Disaster Impact Report*, submitted to WEM on August 12, 2019.
- liii Langlade County Emergency Management.
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- liii US Census Bureau, 2010.
- liii Oconto County Emergency Management, phone call to WEM Response Section Supervisor on August 15, 2019.
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- liii US Census Bureau, 2010.
- liii National Weather Service Milwaukee-Sullivan 2019.
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- liii Barron County Emergency Management, *Disaster Impact Report*, submitted to WEM on August 5, 2019.
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- lxxxii "2014 Barron County Agriculture: Value & Economic Impact,"; Barron County Emergency Management.
- lxxxiii Polk County Emergency Management.
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