



CHARLIE CRIST
GOVERNOR

August 20, 2008

The Honorable George W. Bush
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D. C.

Through: Mr. Major Phillip May, Regional Administrator
FEMA Region IV
3003 Chamblee-Tucker Road
Atlanta, Georgia 30341

RE: REQUEST FOR EMERGENCY DECLARATION

Dear President Bush:

Under the provisions of Section 501(a) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 5121-5206 (Stafford Act), and implemented by 44 CFR § 206.35, I request that you declare an emergency for the State of Florida as a result of Tropical Storm Fay, beginning on August 18, 2008 and continuing. This request is based on findings that supplementary federal emergency assistance is necessary to save lives and to protect property, public health and safety, or to lessen or avert additional destruction. Until such time that other damages may qualify for supplemental federal assistance, the state specifically requests Public Assistance, Categories A – B, to include direct federal assistance for all counties.

To date, the following counties have experienced sustained tropical storm force winds (some have experienced gusts of category one hurricane strength): Brevard, Broward, Charlotte, Collier, Miami-Dade, DeSoto, Glades, Hardee, Hendry, Highlands, Indian River, Lee, Martin, Monroe, Okeechobee, Orange, Osceola, Palm Beach, Polk, Seminole, St. Lucie, and Volusia counties. Tropical Storm Fay has produced widespread and in some cases historic flooding across the Florida peninsula from August 18-20. Heavy rains in excess of 8 inches have fallen across large portions of Brevard, Collier, Hendry, Glades, Highlands, Indian River, Palm Beach, Martin, Okeechobee, Osceola, and St. Lucie counties.

Tropical Storm Fay has essentially stalled near Cape Canaveral in Brevard County and is producing historic flooding across a large portion of southern Brevard County. Several rain gauges have recorded storm totals in excess of 15 to 20 inches in portions of Glades. The National Weather Service in Melbourne has characterized this event as historic, with rainfall totals in excess of 30 inches now forecast for the southern half of Brevard County. Flash flood warnings and impacts to homes, businesses, and infrastructure have been ongoing in southern Brevard County since the evening hours on August 19. Fay has and will continue to produce copious amounts of rain over a large portion of Northeast Florida as the tropical storm turns westward on August 21. Rainfall totals in excess of 15 inches are forecast for coastal northeast Florida and flood watches are posted for this region through August 22.

Excessive rainfall, flooding and sustained winds have also resulted in significant agricultural losses to sugar cane growers in DeSoto, Glades, Hardee, Hendry, Indian River, and Okeechobee counties. Growers of corn, peanuts, cotton, hay and tobacco in Columbia, Suwannee, Lafayette, Madison, Jefferson, Leon, Gadsden, Jackson, Calhoun, Washington, Holmes, Walton, Okaloosa, Santa Rosa, and Escambia counties will experience problems in the coming days as Fay turns westward. These counties are currently in the process of harvesting these crops and the rainfall produced from Fay may jeopardize the entire crop. Vegetable production in the southern portion of the state (Broward, Collier, Miami-Dade, Glades, Hendry, Lee, and Palm Beach) has been impacted as the rainfall in the past few days will likely result in postponing planting for 30 days. This delay would significantly reduce vegetable crop production for the 2008 growing season. Depending on how long water stands in some counties, dairy production from cows will dramatically decrease. Lastly, sustained tropical storm force winds has resulted in significant damage to fruit growers. Tropical storm force winds contribute to blowing sand and blemishing crops which will bring less at market.

Excessive rainfall has also posed significant problems for sewer and water treatment operations in Glades and Brevard counties. Brevard will most likely receive a record amount of rainfall stressing sewer and water treatment facilities until flood levels recede. In Glades County, a significant number of private water wells have experienced contamination from the overflow of septic tanks. Health inspectors have been deployed to the county to assist local health officials with inspections.

Fay's sustained tropical storm force wind and tidal activity has also resulted in excessive beach erosion along the eastern coast. Monroe, Broward, Palm Beach, Martin, Miami-Dade, St. Lucie, Indian River, Brevard, Volusia, Flagler counties have reported beach erosion. Later today, St. Johns, Duval, and Nassau counties will experience significant winds and tidal activity as Fay moves northeast.

Fay remains a significant threat. Tornadoes have touched down in the following counties: Brevard, Broward, Glades, Martin, Monroe, Palm Beach, and St. Lucie counties. As Fay continues to move northeast towards the Atlantic Ocean she is projected to move westward within the next 24 hours, impacting additional counties.

In response to the situation, on August 16, 2008, I issued Executive Order 08-170 declaring a state of emergency for the entire state (see attached). I have taken appropriate action under state law and directed the execution of the state Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP) in accordance with Section 501 (a) of the Stafford Act.

Pursuant to 44 CFR § 206.35, I have determined that this incident is of such severity and magnitude that effective response is beyond the capabilities of the state and affected local governments, and that supplementary federal assistance (Categories A - B under the Public Assistance program) and direct federal assistance is necessary to save lives and to protect property, public health and safety, or to lessen or avert the threat of a disaster. The state's ability to respond has been effected by the state's current revenue shortfall (1.8 billion) as some agencies do not possess the historical general revenue to commit its full compliment of resources. Since activating the State Emergency Response Team and State Emergency Operations Center, the state has expended approximately 1.29 million in operational costs in response to this emergency. State agencies have expended approximately 24.2 million in operational costs.

Preliminary estimates of the types and amount of emergency assistance needed under the Stafford Act, and emergency assistance from certain federal agencies under other statutory authorities are tabulated in Enclosure A.

The following information is furnished on the nature and amount of state and local resources that have been or will be used to alleviate the conditions of this emergency:

- The state has been under a declared state of emergency since August 16, 2008 (31 counties have declared a local state of emergency).
- The State Emergency Operations Center has been operating under a Level 1 activation since 0700 hours on August 18, 2008.
- On August 19, 2008, the State Emergency Response Team (SERT) deployed 2 Incident Management Teams (14 personnel).
- The SERT has activated the State Logistics Response Center (SLRC), located in Orlando, to coordinate the deliver of emergency relief supplies. ESF 13 (Military Support) deployed 16 Guardsmen to assist with operations. Approximately 50 truckloads of emergency commodities standby to be deployed.
- ESF 13 has deployed 6 Reconnaissance Teams. A total of 216 Florida Guardsmen have been activated. Five Regional Emergency Response Nodes (communications vehicles) are on standby.
- 31 counties have declared local state of emergencies.
- The SERT Chief deployed a Logistics Management Team (LMT) to the State Logistics Response Center to assist with operations.
- 12 SERT Liaisons have been deployed to assist counties.
- The SERT has deployed 1 EOC Support Team (7 personnel) to assist Glades County EOC.
- 14 Light Technical Rescue teams remain on standby status.
- The SERT has deployed 3 Preliminary Damage Assessments teams (more will be deployed in the coming days).
- The following counties have ordered evacuations: August 17 and 18, Monroe County; August 18, Collier and Lee counties; August 19, Broward, Collier, Monroe, Okeechobee and Sarasota counties; August 20, 2008, Duval, Flagler, and St. John's counties.
- 61 shelters have been activated statewide sheltering approximately 1,500 persons.

The following information is furnished on efforts and resources of other federal agencies, which have been or will be used in responding to this incident:

- FEMA has deployed an IMAT to the State Emergency Operations Center.
- FEMA has deployed 3 liaisons to assist counties.
- FEMA has assigned personnel to partake in preliminary damage assessments.

I certify that for this emergency, the State and local governments will assume all applicable non-federal share of costs required by the Stafford Act.

In accordance with 44 CFR § 206.208, the State of Florida agrees that it will, with respect to direct federal assistance:

1. Provide without cost to the United States all lands, easement, 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 Agreement; and
4. Assist the performing Federal agency in all support and local jurisdictional matters.

In addition, I anticipate the need for debris removal, which poses an immediate threat to lives, public health, and safety.

Pursuant to Sections 502 and 407 of the Stafford Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 5192 & 5173, the State 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 agrees that debris removal from public and private property will not occur until the landowner signs an unconditional authorization for the removal of debris.

I have designated W. Craig Fugate as the State Coordinating Officer for this request. He will work with the Federal Emergency Management Agency in damage assessments and may provide further information or justification on my behalf.

During the next 24 hours, Tropical Storm Fay will again be over the Atlantic Ocean and may intensify as a result. The National Hurricane Center is projecting that Fay will continue along the Northeast coast of Florida and turn westward around the Florida/Georgia border. Tropical storm conditions remain in much of the East Central and Northeast Florida tonight. Under this weather forecast, additional counties will be threatened by sustained tropical force winds. Isolated tornadoes are still possible over Northeast Florida and heavy rainfall of

4-8 inches is expected across the eastern Peninsula with isolated amounts up to 10 inches. The costs associated with Fay will continue to increase as additional counties are threatened by Fay. Within the next 24 to 48 hours, these counties will be initiating protective measures to ensure the safety of their communities.

The State of Florida thanks you in advance for your continued support and recognition of the perils that Tropical Storm Fay poses to public safety and property.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Charlie Crist". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "C" and a long, sweeping tail.

Charlie Crist

Enclosure

cc: W. Craig Fugate, State Coordinating Officer