



State of New Mexico

Office of the Governor

Bill Richardson
Governor

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Governor Bill Richardson To Seek Presidential Disaster Declaration For Hatch

(Santa Fe, NM) – Governor Bill Richardson announced today that he will sign a presidential disaster declaration request for the Village of Hatch and Dona Ana County to help rebuild following the severe flooding that has stricken the state since July 26. The Governor will send the request to the White House on Monday.

On Friday, August 18th representatives from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) joined State Emergency Management officials in a joint damage assessment tour of the area surveying businesses, homes, and rental properties damaged by the flood.

As many as 402 homes have been affected. The majority of the Village of Hatch was left underwater on August 15 from a breached arroyo sending mud and excessive water through neighborhoods and down the business district. Other communities in Dona Ana County, like Sunland Park and Chaparral Wells, battled flooding in prior weeks.

“I am committed to provide all possible assistance to the people of Hatch and Dona Ana County,” said Governor Richardson. “That includes a strong push for federal assistance to help the community recover from this disaster.”

The presidential disaster declaration request, if granted, would make all qualified homeowners, business owners, and renters in Dona Ana County eligible for assistance from the federal government. FEMA may be able to provide temporary housing, repair, replacement, and permanent housing construction to qualified households or other housing needs like disaster related medical or dental costs, clothing, household items, tools, cleanup items, damaged vehicles, or other necessary expenses or serious needs as determined by FEMA. A presidential declaration is a difficult order to obtain and the timeline for the process is unknown.

Governor Richardson has also requested FEMA and the State Office of Emergency Management conduct a joint damage assessment for public infrastructure for up to sixteen other counties in New Mexico. These assessments will commence early next week and will determine if the Governor requests a presidential disaster declaration for the qualifying counties in the area of public assistance which would cover expenses incurred by cities and counties like labor, equipment, materials, and contract work associated with recent flooding.