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West Virginia Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management

News Release

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GOVERNOR REQUESTS FEDERAL AID FOR DISASTER AREAS

CHARLESTON, W. Va. – Governor Joe Manchin III has requested that President George W. Bush declare a Major Disaster in West Virginia as a result of the flooding, landslides, mudslides, heavy rain and high winds that took place beginning April 14, 2007. The declaration would make available federal assistance to clear and repair roads, remove debris, repair other damaged infrastructure and assist first responders with the expenses they have incurred responding to this disaster. In addition, it would allow for all cities and counties in the state to apply for mitigation funding.

Gov. Manchin's request was based on information developed jointly by federal and state personnel and specified Boone, Cabell, Lincoln, Logan, Mingo, Wayne and Wyoming Counties. Assessments are continuing and the Gov. Manchin stated in his letter that he reserved the right to request other forms of assistance and for additional counties to be included in the declaration.

The principal program requested by Governor Manchin is called Public Assistance by FEMA and is intended to help state and local governments recover from a declared disaster. It also covers certain eligible, private, non-profit organizations.

Public Assistance is for the repair of eligible publicly owned infrastructure such as: roads, bridges, public service districts and schools. It can also assist in paying the costs of emergency protective measures such as evacuation and debris removal by local and state government resources such as the West Virginia National Guard and Division of Highways.

The program is administered by the West Virginia Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management and FEMA. If declared, there will be Applicant Assistance Briefings for public officials who represent those agencies and groups that potentially have eligible Public Assistance expenses or damages.

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