



**STATE OF ARKANSAS**

**ASA HUTCHINSON  
GOVERNOR**

**REQUEST FOR PRESIDENTIAL EMERGENCY DECLARATION**

May 29, 2019

The Honorable Donald J. Trump  
President of the United States  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20500

Through: George A. Robinson, Regional Administrator  
FEMA Region 6  
800 North Loop 288  
Denton, TX 76209

Dear Mr. President:

Under the provisions of Section 501 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 5121-5207 (Stafford Act), and implemented by 44 CFR §206.35, I respectfully request that you declare an emergency for the State of Arkansas as a result of Severe Storms and Flooding that began May 21, 2019 and continuing. In response to this event, I took appropriate action under state law and directed the execution of the Arkansas Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan on May 23, 2019 and also declared a State of Emergency on May 24, 2019. All county judges of the affected jurisdictions have declared an emergency as well. The local governments and the State of Arkansas are bearing the cost for response to this disaster.

I have determined 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 is necessary. In recent days, a ridge of high pressure has built over the southeastern United States. In the recent days, 10-15 inches of rainfall has fallen in parts of the plains and Midwest, affecting northeast Oklahoma requiring releases on the Arkansas River Basin. Severe Storms have occurred and now record breaking flooding is occurring on the Arkansas River beginning in Western Arkansas and continuing through the state into the Mississippi River. The state is conducting extensive flood fighting operations with multiple counties impacted with extensive

property and infrastructure damages either occurring or anticipated to occur. Levees along the river are inspected on a regular basis with several seeing seepage and emergency repairs occurring as necessary. The levee system along the Arkansas River has not seen this type of record flooding and the long-term saturation will provide prolonged stress and yield devastating impacts to infrastructure and personal property if failures occur. Based on the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) inundation map and the estimated flow of 560,000 CFS on the Arkansas River, the areas from the City of Fort Smith to Pea Ridge Community (Desha County) is populated with 17,826 citizens. The areas from Fort Smith to Russellville has a potential impact to 883 structures. From Russellville to Portland Bottoms has a potential impact 172 structures; Portland Bottoms to Little Rock has a potential impact of 859 structures; and from Little Rock to Pea Ridge Community has a potential impact of 1,210 structures to include 90 critical facilities (Fire, Law, Communications, Education, Public Health, Transportation, Energy, Dams, and Wastewater). Total structures with the potential impact is 3,124. There is a population of 8,535 citizens and 1,561 structures to include 166 critical facilities in the levee protected areas along the Arkansas River. Several areas behind the levees are agricultural and the industry is taking necessary steps to remove livestock to safer grounds. Local jurisdictions and first responders are using social media and other news media to encourage evacuations ahead of the flooding. Citizens are taking precautionary measures to voluntarily evacuate prior to any mandatory evacuation orders and/or emergency service disruptions from the rising water and potential closure of hundreds of roads. Four shelters are currently located in the cities of Fort Smith (Sebastian Co.), Conway (Faulkner Co.), Altheimer (Jefferson Co.), and Wright (Jefferson Co.) with a capacity of 755 citizens. Shelters are operational and prepared to receive citizens. Salvation Army is assisting with feeding at the shelters. Discussions for opening a Multi-Agency Resource Center in Sebastian County have begun. At this time, no fatalities have been reported and one person has been injured in Pope County.

The State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) is currently activated to Level 1 (Full Activation) with support from all 16 Emergency Support Functions. ADEM Area Coordinators are supporting the local EOCs with technical and logistical support; ADEM Public Information Officer is supporting the local EOCs with all media relations, conducting rumor control, and providing safety messages through press releases and social media. ADEM is hosting daily response coordination calls with all Emergency Management partners at the local, state, and federal levels; continues to partner with the USACE to conduct levee monitoring/inspections and sandbagging operations. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security - Public Security Advisor is located in the SEOC and providing information regarding critical infrastructure threats and hazards. Arkansas National Guard is coordinating with the National Guard Bureau for satellite imagery and the 188th Wing UPAD to conduct real-time identification of risks and vulnerabilities; two high-water rescue units are pre-staged along the river for emergency evacuations. These teams are also supporting the local communities with sandbag operations. The Arkansas Wing Civil Air Patrol has also been mission assigned to provide aerial imagery and video

in support of the NGAR 188<sup>th</sup> Wing UPAD mission. Arkansas is also receiving mutual aid assistance from the State of Tennessee for an additional sandbag filling machine and inquiring other mutual aid support from other states to support the flood fight. Arkansas Department of Transportation continues to monitor the state highways and providing logistical support to the SEOC with the movement of sandbags and other equipment. They are preparing for possible highway closures and detours as the river continues to rise. Arkansas Department of Information Systems has prepared the Arkansas Wireless Information Network (AWIN) site-on-wheels for deployed to support local communications. They have also coordinated with Verizon and AT&T for potential response. The Arkansas Forestry Commission is providing levee patrol flights along the river and providing areas of concern to the local jurisdictions. Arkansas Department of Human Services is maintaining situational awareness and coordinating any mass care needs with local jurisdictions and volunteer agencies. The Department of Finance and Administration is supporting procurement needs in the SEOC and currently ordering additional sand and locating sandbagging machines for future operations. The Arkansas Department of Health (ADH) is monitoring all infrastructure along the river to include Arkansas Nuclear One plant in coordination with the ADH Nuclear Planning and Response Office and Radiation Control. ADH engineering have been notified of ongoing waste water facility impacts in Fort Smith, AR. ADH Health Preparedness & Emergency Response (HPER) Branch, Healthcare Preparedness Program (HPP), is conducting medical coordination virtually with Regional Healthcare Coalitions, Arkansas Hospital Association (AHA), and Arkansas Health Care Association (AHCA – long term care & nursing homes). Arkansas Game and Fish Commission continues to monitor the river valley and prepared to support local jurisdictions with any swift water rescue missions. Arkansas State Police (ASP) Emergency Response Teams are monitoring the event and are capable of response if necessary. They are prepared to support local law enforcement and ARDOT with road closures and traffic control points. State Police in Troops A, C, E, H, and J were heavily impacted by flood waters. The Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality and Arkansas Public Services Commission continue to monitor the flooding situation with potential impacts to Hazardous Materials and Energy. Historic sandbagging efforts are currently taking place throughout the state. Volunteer, prison and county labor are currently being utilized around the clock to battle the historically unparalleled river flooding levels. Sandbagging machines are being sent from county to county, racing the rising of the river to prevent devastation from the record-breaking water levels. The state has utilized EMAC to bring in additional sandbagging machines from Missouri and Tennessee to assist in the effort.

Due to the unknowns associated with this event, and the amount of rain and changing conditions, it is difficult to estimate the level of Direct Federal Assistance required. The activities listed below are our current estimate based on past experience:

- United States Army Corps of Engineers - sandbags, self-contained pumps, damage assessment teams, power generation, technical assistance, mapping, GIS support, and inundation mapping

- United States Coast Guard - air transportation assets, technical assistance
- Civil Air Patrol - air assets
- United States Fish and Wildlife Service - wildlife management assistance and technical assistance
- United States Department of Agriculture - crop damage assessment, technical assistance water management and inundation mapping
- Federal Highway Administration - Emergency Relief Program
- Environmental Protection Agency – damage assessments, technical assistance
- National Guard – heavy lift helicopters, aerial imagery

The nature of this record breaking flood event will significantly impair the ability to travel in the affected areas of the state. The flooding will cause excessive debris and could possibly wash out bridges. Arkansas Department of Transportation and local road crews are continuously monitoring flood waters, setting up barricades and making emergency repairs as needed.

The following counties and ARDOT are reporting several roads closed and expecting many others. At this time, ARDOT is reporting the following state highways closed due to flooding:

Arkansas	State Highway 144	High Water	Both Lanes
Conway	State Highway 113	High Water	Both Lanes
Franklin	State Highway 309	High Water	Both Lanes
Franklin	State Highway 23	High Water	Both Lanes
Logan	State Highway 309	High Water	Both Lanes
Perry	State Highway 216	High Water	Both Lanes
Pope	State Highway 105	Other/Levee Repair	Both Lanes
Pope	State Highway 105	High Water	Both Lanes
Sebastian	State Highway 22	High Water	Both Lanes
Sebastian	State Highway 255	High Water	Both Lanes
Sebastian	State Highway 96	High Water	Both Lanes
Sebastian	State Highway 252	High Water	Both Lanes
Sebastian	U.S. Highway 64	High Water	Westbound

Flooding in Franklin County has required ARDOT to close the State Highway 23 Bridge in Ozark and there is no detour. The nearest Arkansas River crossings from Ozark include the State Highway 59 Bridge at Barling and the State Highway 109 Bridge at Morrison Bluff. The county is also reporting that Sheep Farm at Carpenter Cemetery and

Hurricane Creek, Sheep Farm at Hurricane Creek, Santa Fe Trail at Corps of Engineers Relief, and Highway 309 at Smith Creek, Bar Cliff Lane, Carbon Plant Road, East Market and South Bell Street in Ozark, Jennie Road, Kenny Hole Road, Mattie / Adams Road and White Oak Creek, Ozark Lock and Dam Road, Plum Street and Coon Tree Rd., Aux Arc Park, And White Oak Park roads are closed. Johnson County has reported that the South End of County Road 2361, County Road 2140, County Road 2181 South of 2140, Private Road 2052, County Road 2120, County Road 2110, County Road 2091, County Road 2051 South of Railroad Track, County Road 2010, River Road from Big Danger to East of Top of Hill, County Road 2550 Between Hwy 64 and County Road 2549, and Private Road 1715 are all closed.

Logan County is reporting the north end of 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Tanyard Mtn. Rd., Boyd Dr., Union Rd., Blueberry Lane, Kalamazoo, Catfish Lane, N. AR Highway 309, and N. Carbon City Rd. are all closed. On May 27, ARDOT crews closed the U.S. Highway 71B (Broadway St.) bridge in Ft. Smith (Sebastian County). This structure is known locally as the Midland Bridge. There was no detour available. Following the closure of the Midland Bridge, ARDOT crews closed the I-540 river bridge. Northbound traffic was required to take Exit 5 (Kelley Highway). Southbound traffic was required to take Exit 3 (Van Buren). These bridges were closed because floodwater was predicted to cover the approaches. This left only one crossing of the Arkansas River in the Ft. Smith area – the State Highway 59 Bridge. ARDOT also shut down the westbound lanes of the U.S. Highway 64 Bridge (Garrison Ave.) due do both eastbound and westbound lanes going under water in Oklahoma. There are approximately 10 segments of State Highways closed in the River Valley with more expected in the coming days. See enclosures for iDrive Arkansas Road Status Map.

Since January 2018, there have been 4 Gubernatorial declarations for the state and 2 pending state declarations. Damages from these events are estimated at \$9,674,695 and are expected to severely deplete the Governor's Disaster Relief Fund. Although Arkansas has a State Public Assistance Program, it would be difficult for the State to bare all of the financial responsibilities and properly recover from the current event without the assistance of a Presidential Emergency Declaration for the current event. In addition to the state disasters declared since January 2018, Arkansas continues to recover from 21 presidentially declared disasters since 2008. Many of the same counties in Arkansas are continually inundated with severe weather, which has put a burden on not only the local jurisdictions but also the state's ability to effectively continue to respond to, and recover from, such events.

In conclusion, I have determined that these storms and flooding are of such severity and magnitude that effective response is beyond the capabilities of the State and affected local governments, and that supplementary Federal assistance is necessary. I am specifically Category A and B, limited to Direct Federal Assistance, for Arkansas, Chicot, Conway, Crawford, Desha, Faulkner, Franklin, Jefferson, Johnson, Lincoln, Logan, Perry, Pope, Sebastian, and Yell counties. Arkansas is both experiencing and expecting

significant and widespread impacts on and near the Arkansas River and additional rainfall this week will prolong major flooding and will add additional pressure to river levees. Your favorable consideration for this declaration is appreciated.

Sincerely,



Asa Hutchinson

Enclosures

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

Enclosure C

Governor's Proclamation

National Weather Service Data

iDrive Arkansas Road Status Map