



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA LETTER

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Department Name: FIRE-OEM
Department No.: 031
For Agenda Of: April 2, 2024
Placement: Administrative
Estimated Time:
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: 4/5th

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Department Mark Hartwig, Fire Chief/Fire Warden
Director(s)
Contact Info: Kelly Hubbard, Director of Office of Emergency Management

SUBJECT: Re-ratification of Proclamation of Local Emergency Caused by the February 2024 Storm, All Supervisorial Districts

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence: NA

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: NA

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Supervisors:

- a) Adopt a Resolution Re-ratifying the Proclamation of Local Emergency caused by the February 2024 Storms in Santa Barbara County pursuant to Government Code Section 8630; and
- b) Receive an update on the February 2024 Storm and its impacts; and
- c) Direct the Office of Emergency Management to return every sixty (60) days for ratification of the Emergency until such a time that conditions dictate otherwise; and
- d) Determine that these actions are exempt from the provisions of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines sections 15061(b)(3) and 15269.

Summary Text:

This item is to receive an update and adopt a Resolution Re-ratifying the Proclamation of Local Emergency related to the February 2024 Storms declared by the Director of Emergency Services on February 04, 2024.

Heavy rainstorms fell February 4, 2024 for a period of 48 hours, preceded by an earlier storm that occurred January 31 to February 1, 2024. The February 4, 2024 storm resulted in heavy rain, flooding, and high winds, with the heaviest rainfall in the southern part of the County. The rains resulted in the potential for life threatening and damaging flooding in existing burn scar areas, near impacted creeks and low-lying areas, as a result of the storms and ongoing saturated soils resulting in ongoing impacts to residents and infrastructure.

- Beginning on January 25, 2024 County Departments and Operational Area partners started emergency protective actions and mitigations to prepare for the coming storms.
- County OEM held public safety coordination meetings January 31 through February 5, 2024 and again from February 15-21, 2024. Additionally, OEM and other public safety agencies continued to discuss and determine additional actions needed in between and after each major storm due to additional smaller rain events.
- On February 2, 2024 the National Weather Service issued a Flood Watch, as well as a High Wind Warning for potentially damaging winds that could result in downed trees, power lines, and dangerous seas.
- On February 2, 2024, the County issued an Evacuation Warning to vulnerable areas related to the Thomas Fire Storm Risk Considerations Map, the Cave Fire and Alisal Fire burn scar areas. The City of Santa Barbara issued an Evacuation Warning for properties in the vicinity of Sycamore Creek, from Stanwood Drive to parts of Ninos Drive.
- The County/Operational Area EOC opened on February 2, 2024 and remained activated through February 6, 2024.
- On February 3, 2024, the areas under Evacuation Warning were upgraded to an Evacuation Order. This Evacuation Order was also extended to California State Park's campgrounds within the County, including Refugio, Carpinteria, Gaviota, and El Capitan. These actions were issued as a result of the immediate flooding threat.
- On February 4, 2024, the Governor of the State of California proclaimed a State of Emergency to exist in eight impacted counties including Santa Barbara County.
- On February 5, 2024 all Evacuation Orders within the County and City of Santa Barbara were cancelled.
- On February 15, 2024 the National Weather Service issued a Flood Watch for the majority of the county. Wind Advisories, High Wind Warnings, and Coastal Flood Advisories were issued in subsequent days for multiple areas of the county.
- On February 17, 2024 the County issued an Evacuation Warning for the properties along waterways associated with the Thomas, Cave and Alisal burn areas. The City of Santa Barbara issued an Evacuation Warning for properties in the vicinity of Sycamore Creek, from Stanwood Dr. down to parts of Ninos Dr., and properties in the vicinity of Mission Creek, from Cota St. down to Highway 101 and between Chapala St. and Castillo St.
- On February 19, Evacuation Warnings were cancelled for the properties along waterways associated with the Thomas and Cave burn areas, and remained in place for all other areas.
- Highway 144, Highway 192, and Refugio Road were closed or significantly impacted due to flooding, debris and road damages. These impacts along with additional rainfall and thunderstorm forecasts through February 21 impeded the cancellation of remaining Evacuation Warnings.
- On February 20 and 21, all remaining Evacuation Warnings within the County and City of Santa Barbara were cancelled.

These storms caused conditions of extreme peril to the safety of persons and property within the County of Santa Barbara. These conditions were beyond the control of the services, personnel, equipment, and facilities of the combined forces of Santa Barbara County Operational Area to combat. These conditions warranted and necessitated that the County proclaim the existence or threatened existence of a Local Emergency in order to utilize all resources necessary to respond to the damage that was caused by this storm, and receive assistance from the State and Federal governments.

Background:

The Director of Emergency Services issued a Proclamation of Local Emergency due to the conditions of extreme peril to the safety of persons and property within the County of Santa Barbara, as evidenced by a Flood Watch, Countywide Flash Flood Warnings, and High Wind Warning issued by the National Weather Service and the protective actions by the Sheriff’s Office. Government Code section 8630(b) requires the Board of Supervisors to ratify a Local Emergency within seven days. Section 8630(c) requires the Board to review the need for the continued existence of the Local Emergency at least every 60 days, and Section 8630(d) requires termination of the Local Emergency at the earliest possible date that conditions warrant.

The County Office of Emergency Management (OEM), CEO Budget Office, and Public Works continue to coordinate post-disaster recovery efforts. Ongoing recovery efforts include emergency protective measures of critical infrastructure, restoration or repair of government infrastructure, coordination of resources for residential, business and agricultural partners, fiscal tracking of countywide efforts, and more.

Estimated Damages:

With a preliminary estimate of \$61.6 million in combined infrastructure damage, response costs, and agriculture losses throughout the Operational Area as of March 19, 2024, the County asked for the immediate and expedited consideration and approval of Santa Barbara County for FEMA Stafford Act Funding for winter storm emergency response and recovery. To include:

- Public Assistance Categories A - G
- Individual Assistance fiscal resources
- Agricultural fiscal assistance

As of docketing this Board item, no response from FEMA to the County’s request has been received.

For residential impacts the County relies on Community self-reporting, collection of information from Building and Safety Departments, as well as any field reports of significant damage. Self-reporting can be done through the www.ReadySBC.org website. Although this does not guarantee any assistance, it helps the county to identify all potential impacts and to advocate for any fiscal or social programs that may be available. As of 2/15/2024, our county-wide initial residential damage estimates with CalOES and FEMA were as follows:

Degree of Damage	Homes Assessed
Destroyed	0
Major	4
Minor	5

Affected	40
Unaffected	35
Inaccessible	1
Total	85

It is important to note, that the County is aware of ongoing landslides or slope failures on private property that has impacted residential spaces, as well as public infrastructure. OEM has reached out to CalOES to advocate for and explore additional support options for these community members.

In regards to the agricultural community, these disaster impacts are self-reported through the Agricultural Commissioner’s website at <https://www.countyofsb.org/266/Agricultural-Commissioner>. As of February 15, 2024, Agricultural Impacts were estimated at \$41,809,121 at 35 different sites. This includes damages to crops, as well as farm buildings and machinery.

Initial estimates of response costs and damages for all local government entities in the County is \$19.8 million. These were initial estimates. OEM will request updated estimates from all agencies should the County be approved for FEMA public assistance. County Public Works provides a separate update to the Board in regards to their damages, which is the highest costs to the County for these incidents.

The initial estimates by Public Assistance Category for all local government agencies within the County is as follows:

	Storm 1		Storm 2		Estimated Totals
	Number of Sites	Estimated Costs	Number of Sites	Estimated Costs	
Category A – Debris Removal and Disposal	105	\$6,901,908	27	\$1,440,800	\$8,342,708
Category B – Emergency Protective Measures	24	\$1,639,471	3	\$105,000	\$1,744,471
Category C – Road and Bridge System	6	\$2,540,000	6	\$955,000	\$3,495,000
Category D – Water Control Facilities	34	\$2,121,350	0	\$0	\$2,121,350
Category E – Public Buildings and Equipment	14	\$290,170	3	\$113,600	\$403,770
Category F – Public Utilities	6	\$162,000	0	\$0	\$162,000
Category G: Park/Recreational/Other	21	\$2,545,000	8	\$1,017,100	\$3,562,100

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

Budgeted: No

Fiscal Analysis:

The fiscal impacts to the County continue to be evaluated and will be reported to the Board at a future meeting as costs and damage are assessed. The County is waiting to hear back from CalOES and FEMA in regards to any state or fiscal assistance which could provide up to 93.75% in reimbursement of eligible costs.

Staffing Impacts:

None

Special Instructions:

Direct the Clerk of the Board to send a copy of the minute order of these actions to the following:
Office of Emergency Management, Attn: Kendall Johnston kejohnston@countyofsb.org

Attachments:

Attachment A: Resolution Ratifying the Proclamation of Local Emergency for the February 2024 Storm

Authored by:

Kelly Hubbard, Director of Office of Emergency Management