

## **Governor Requests Federal Aid For Western Counties Struck By Flooding And Mudslides**

By Administrator

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Governor Roy Cooper has requested a major federal disaster declaration for 13 Western North Carolina counties that were affected by heavy rains, flooding and mudslides in May.

The request is for federal disaster assistance through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to help local governments repair damaged infrastructure and to help homeowners, renters and business owners repair homes that were damaged by the floodwaters. It includes Avery, Buncombe, Caldwell, Henderson, Jackson, Madison, McDowell, Mitchell, Polk, Rutherford, Swain, Watauga, and Yancey counties.

“Many people in our western counties are still trying to recover from these floods and mudslides and we want to get them all the help that we can,” Governor Roy Cooper said.

Widespread rainfall of 10 to 20 inches in many locations produced North Carolina’s wettest May on record dating back to 1940, according to the North Carolina State Climate Office and the North Carolina Division of Emergency Management. The heaviest rains came at the end of the month when moisture from Subtropical Storm Alberto soaked an already saturated western North Carolina.

Governor Roy Cooper declared a State of Emergency on May 30th for western North Carolina after heavy rains caused mudslides in multiple communities, closed portions of I-40 east of Asheville and triggered evacuations in Old Fort and near Lake Tahoma in McDowell County. Roads were closed in many counties due to downed trees and mudslides.

Teams from local and state emergency management agencies have been surveying damage and compiling damage reports since late May in order to submit a comprehensive request for a federal disaster declaration.

“There was extensive damage to many public roads, bridge and culverts due to an extended period of heavy rains,” said state Emergency Management Director Mike Sprayberry. “About 175 homes were damaged or affected, and we are requesting assistance for those homeowners as well.”

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