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Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release
April 23, 2009

President Obama Signs Major Disaster Declaration for Georgia

The President today declared a major disaster exists in the State of Georgia and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, flooding, tornadoes, and straight-line winds beginning on March 26, 2009, and continuing.

The President's action makes Federal funding available to affected individuals in the counties of Berrien, Brantley, Brooks, Coffee, Colquitt, Decatur, Dougherty, Echols, Lanier, Lowndes, Miller, Mitchell, Pierce, Tift, Ware, Wheeler, and Worth.

Assistance can include grants for temporary housing and home repairs, low-cost loans to cover uninsured property losses, and other programs to help individuals and business owners recover from the effects of the disaster.

Federal funding also is available to State and eligible local governments and certain private nonprofit organizations on a cost-sharing basis for emergency work and the repair or replacement of facilities damaged by the severe storms, flooding, tornadoes, and straight-line winds in the counties of Appling, Atkinson, Bacon, Baker, Ben Hill, Berrien, Clinch, Coffee, Colquitt, Early, Echols, Grady, Lowndes, Mitchell, Montgomery, Pierce, Toombs, and Ware.

Federal funding is also available on a cost-sharing basis for hazard mitigation measures statewide.

Terry L. Quarles has been named as the Federal Coordinating Officer for Federal recovery operations in the affected area.

FEMA said that damage surveys are continuing in other areas, and additional counties may be designated for assistance after the assessments are fully completed.

FEMA said that residents and business owners who sustained losses in the designated counties can begin applying for assistance tomorrow by registering online at <http://www.DisasterAssistance.gov> or by calling 1-800-621-FEMA(3362) or 1-800-462-7585 (TTY) for the hearing and speech impaired. The toll-free telephone numbers will operate from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. (local time) seven days a week until further notice.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: FEMA (202) 646-4600.

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