THE BEACON
Nebraska Emergency Management Agency
Special Edition
June Storms and Flooding
Gov. Dave Heineman was notified July 15 that his request for a federal disaster declaration for Public Assistance in 53 Nebraska counties was approved by President Barack Obama for storm damage and flooding that occurred throughout June.

“We appreciate the approval of the disaster declaration for Public Assistance,” said Gov. Heineman. “The federal government and local entities have been good partners working with the state as we assessed the severe and extensive damage that occurred throughout Nebraska. I am proud of Nebraskans for coming together and helping each other in challenging times.”

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Region VII office notified the governor that the Public Assistance portion of his request had been approved. Public Assistance can help with eligible costs to remove storm debris, take emergency protective measures and repair or replace disaster-damaged roads, bridges, public buildings, critical facilities, such as water, sewer and power systems and other public facilities. The counties included in the declaration are:

Antelope, Arthur, Blaine, Boone, Boyd, Brown, Burt, Cass, Chase, Cherry, Cheyenne, Colfax, Cuming, Custer, Dodge, Douglas, Frontier, Garden, Garfield, Gage, Harlan,

Gov. Heineman had also requested Individual Assistance for 33 counties. Individual Assistance can help with disaster-related damages to homes and businesses in the designated counties. This assistance can include money to pay for a temporary place to live while damages to a primary residence are being repaired and/or funds to pay for minimal repairs to make a primary home safe, sanitary and functional. Low-interest disaster loans through the U.S. Small Business Administration also may be available to cover major disaster damages and/or replace personal property.

Individual Assistance has been requested for: Adams, Antelope, Blaine, Brown, Cass, Cherry, Cheyenne, Colfax, Cuming, Custer, Dawson, Dodge, Douglas, Garfield, Greeley, Hayes, Logan, Loup, Madison, McPherson, Morrill, Nuckolls, Otoe, Platte, Richardson, Rock, Sarpy, Scotts Bluff, Sherman, Stanton, Thomas, Valley and Wheeler.

“While extensive, the damage to homes throughout Nebraska counties was not significant enough for approval of the individual assistance,” said Al Berndt, assistant director of NEMA. “We have received additional information on individual damages since the initial request was submitted and those additional damages may be enough for Gov. Heineman to consider an appeal.”

Gov. Heineman said “We will continue to compile damage assessments and provide additional data to see if Individual Assistance is warranted.”

Communities across Nebraska are cleaning up following torna-
does, high winds, heavy rains and flooding that buffeted Nebraska during June.

The storms resulted in historic flooding with significant damage to homes, farms, ranches, businesses and infrastructure. NEMA reports preliminary damage estimates to public infrastructure of more than $16 million. The most severe impacts were to roads, bridges and culverts.

The total financial cost of the storm damage will not be known for several months.

“Many roads remain closed and impassable across the state,” Lt. Gov. Sheehy said in a June 28 telephone news conference. “The counties and the state face many years of recovery.”

Nebraska continues to deal with accessibility issues due to the loss of roads infrastructure.

“The extent of the damage means this will likely be a long-term process for these counties,” said Berndt. “We will work closely with local agencies to help move the recovery along.”

Additional counties may be added to the Governor’s disaster request at a later time. Teams comprised of local, state, and federal officials are assessing additional counties for possible inclusion.
Antelope County - June 13-14 heavy rain in Neligh flooded homes, wiped out roads and bridges and left community members working together to build dikes to prevent further destruction.
Cuming County - The park in West Point was underwater on June 16.

Wayne County - A 12-foot culvert was washed 100 yards away from this Wayne County road (left) leaving the washout in the road (right).

Holt County - Flood waters washed away a bridge approach at the South Fork of the Elkhorn river about three miles west of Ewing.

Adams County - Debris lines a culvert.

Cuming County - The park in West Point was underwater on June 16.
Sioux County Flooding washed out an eight-foot diameter culvert on a County Road.

Scotts Bluff County - A tornado flipped five trailers June 13. The National Weather Service confirmed a tornado with wind speeds up to 98 mph.

Scotts Bluff County - A tornado cut a path 100 yards wide and 19 miles long June 13.

Garden County - Debris collects under a bridge south of Lisco.

Cheyenne County - Flood waters in Sidney created a void under the approach.
Dawson County - Water rises at the Horizon Mobile Home Court in Cozad on June 14.

Howard County - Emergency Manager Michelle Woitalewicz, assesses damage near St. Paul. The homeowner lost more than 60 feet of his backyard.

McPherson County - One of many county roads that suffered from erosion as a result of flooding.

Reporters and Photographers attend the first of four news conferences about flooding in Nebraska on June 14.

Custer County - A National Guardsman on an assessment team exams a 4-foot deep sink hole northeast of Merna.
Assistant Director Al Berndt talks agency representatives in the State Emergency Operation Center.

Governor Heineman discusses flooding at a news conference June 16 held at the Joint Information Center which was located at NET.

Adjutant General Judd Lyons makes a point at one of the daily policy group meeting led by Lt. Gov. Rick Sheehy.

Members of the Nebraska National Guard answered the public flooding hot line at the Joint Information Center.

NEMA Public Information Officer Jodie Fawl (left) discusses the Joint Information Center with Jen Rae Hein, communications director for the Governor, Mike Wight of DHHS, Morgan Kramer of NEMA, Diana Seiffert of DHHS, Christin Kamm of the Department of Agriculture and Adjutant General Judd Lyons.
The Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) is charged by Nebraska statute to reduce the vulnerabilities of the people and communities of Nebraska in terms of injury, loss of life and property damage resulting from natural, technological or man-made disasters and emergencies. NEMA is responsible for coordinating the state response in any major emergency or disaster including the support of local governments as needed or requested, and coordinating assistance with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and other federal partners.

The Beacon is published monthly by NEMA to share news about the agency and emergency management activities throughout the state. Story ideas can be forwarded to: Jodie Fawl, Public Information Officer, NEMA, 1300 Military Road, Lincoln, NE 68508; (402) 471-7428; or jodie.fawl@nebraska.gov.