TINA KOTEK
GOVERNOR

REQUEST FOR PRESIDENTIAL DISASTER DECLARATION
COVER LETTER
MAJOR DISASTER OR EMERGENCY

February 18, 2026

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, D. C.

Through: Acting Regional Administrator Vincent Maykovich
FEMA Region 10
Bothell, Washington, 98021

Dear Mr. President:

Under the provisions of Section Major Disaster citation (401), Emergency citation (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 § Major Disaster citation (206.36), Emergency citation (206.35), I request that you declare a major disaster for the state of Oregon as a result of heavy rain, wind, widespread flooding, landslides and mudslides that occurred in Oregon from December 15, 2025 to December 21, 2025. I am specifically requesting Public Assistance for nine counties -- **Clackamas, Hood River, Lane, Lincoln, Linn, Polk, Tillamook, Union, and Yamhill. I am also requesting that the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) be made available statewide.**

On January 15, 2026, the Associate Administrator of FEMA's Office of Response and Recovery, Gregg Phillips, allowed an extension of time to make this request until February 20, 2026.

Please also see Enclosure 1, FEMA Form 010-0-13 (OMB Control Number 1660-0009), Request *for Presidential Disaster Declaration, Major Disaster or Emergency.*

Multiple households were evacuated due to the storm. Level 2 (Be Set) evacuations were in place for approximately 587 people on December 18, 2025, and at their peak on December 19, 2025, Level 3 (Leave NOW) evacuations were in place for approximately 1,219 people. Tragically, the severe storm event led to one fatality reported in Yamhill County caused by drowning.

The Joint Preliminary Damage Assessment was conducted from January 26 to February 12, 2026, for the following thirteen counties: Baker, Benton, Clackamas, Hood River, Lane, Lincoln, Linn, Marion, Multnomah, Polk, Tillamook, Union and Yamhill, the total validated cost was $15,454,468. The JPDA determined that nine Oregon counties exceeded their per capita indicators for Public Assistance: Clackamas, Hood River, Lane, Lincoln, Linn, Polk, Tillamook, Union, and Yamhill, with 100 percent of the statewide per-capita met for these requested counties**.** Benton county did not meet their current countywide indicator but did exceed 50 percent of their FFY26 per capita indicator. Therefore, that total is included in the final statewide per-capita threshold of $3.32 for this event.

Weather Conditions
High winds, heavy rains, flooding, landslides and mudslides.

A strong and persistent area of high pressure developed over the southwest coast of the United States and positioned a track of storms directly at Oregon for much of the December 15 to December 21, 2025 period. This pattern resulted in much warmer than normal temperatures, higher than normal snow elevation levels, and culminated with an extreme atmospheric river event that brought overlapping impacts including record-breaking flooding, landslides, mudslides and high winds. Many large trees within saturated soil were uprooted and overturned, causing major damage to electrical infrastructure, buildings, and roads. During the same time, many river basins across northwest Oregon experienced between 2 and 5 inches of rain across the lower elevations and 5 to 15 inches of rain across higher elevations.

According to National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) SNOTEL precipitation data, the majority (73%) of sites with at least 20 years of data recorded their highest or second-highest 7-day precipitation totals between December 15 and 21, 2025.

Additionally, an atmospheric river impacted almost the same geographic area about week prior, circa December 8, 2025, through December 9, 2025, saturating soils and creating an opportunity for landslides and other hazards to occur. Although the damage caused by this earlier event was not included in this request, it is notable that the high levels of precipitation from this separate event compounded and exacerbated the conditions and resultant perils witnessed during the December 15 to December 21, 2025, event.

Weather Impacts

The weather impacts included massive and prolonged power outages for hundreds of thousands of Oregonians due to downed power lines and damaged transmissions, multiple highways and road closures were affected due to fallen trees, powerlines, landslides, and washouts; effectively turning parts of the state into ‘islands’ until access

could be restored. Communication systems were also impacted with cell towers, public safety radio systems, and internet connectivity being affected by landslides and washouts. In addition, the state was impacted by a series of severe storms a week earlier that led to widespread disruption including flooding, landslides and mudslides and power outages that local governments were still recovering from when this event occurred. These series of events exhausted resources as crews worked continuously through the period to clear debris, unclog drains, and restore power. At its peak, there were approximately 314,894 individuals without power on December 17, 2025, with power outages lasting up to four days.

During the event, numerous highways and interstates were impacted with outright closures or delays. In total, at least 14 major highways or interstates were impacted by high water, landslides, rockfalls, and fallen trees impacting traffic lanes. Interstate 5 saw delays and lane closures for a day from a landslide near Sutherlin, Oregon on December 20, 2025. Interstate 84 saw delays and lane closures for a day due to a rock fall and high water near Biggs Junction on December 19, 2025. During the incident period, Highway 101 saw numerous closures along the length of the Oregon Coast due to high water, sunken pavement and collapses, impacting domestic and commercial travel during a busy holiday.

Evacuations were in place for numerous jurisdictions due to flooding during the incident period, with the peak Level 3 (Leave Immediately) evacuations encompassing approximately 1,219 people on December 19, 2025. Level 2 (Prepare to Leave at a Moment's Notice) evacuations were in place for approximately 587 people on December 18, 2025. In addition, dozens of school districts, including those in communities of Seaside, Astoria, Toledo and the Willamette Valley, canceled or delayed classes for multiple days due to power outages and unsafe road conditions.

State and Local Response

In accordance with its Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP) the Oregon Department of Emergency Management (OEM) activated the Oregon Emergency Coordination Center to Level 3 for the coordination of state, local, and Tribal response to the severe weather on December 17, 2025.

Due to this disaster and ongoing impacts, on December 30, 2025, pursuant to the authorities granted in ORS 401.165, I declared an emergency due to ongoing impacts that threatened life, safety, property and significant damage to public infrastructure and state roads on the federal-aid highway system. This State of Emergency was declared via Executive Order No. 25-32 on December 30, 2025. This State of Emergency covered twenty-five counties: Clackamas, Clatsop, Coos, Curry, Douglas, Hood River, Jackson, Klamath, Lane, Lincoln, Linn, Marion, Multnomah, Polk, Tillamook, Umatilla, Union, Wallowa, Washington, and Yamhill counties. Via Executive Order No. 26-02 on January 15, 2025, I expanded the earlier declaration to include the counties of Linn, Polk, Umatilla, Union and Wallowa, and directed the Oregon Department of Emergency

Management (OEM) to utilize the CEMP to assist with response and recovery, with full support of the state government enterprise.

Disruptions to Essential Services & Impacts on Infrastructure

The weather event rolled through our small communities and local governments provided an impressive initial response, which included local public utility providers, first responders and voluntary organizations. Counties and cities implemented emergency plans and activated emergency operations centers, while utilities activated mutual aid agreements to restore power as quickly as possible, and heroic emergency response actions were performed by medical, police, fire and public works agencies. State and local transportation agencies did everything within their capabilities to provide residents and travelers with safe passage along severely affected roads, and utility crews worked around the clock to restore power. Fire districts and county search and rescue teams performed numerous swift-water rescues during the incident period, preventing many potential losses of life.

For this event, five shelters were opened to support mass care operations, serving 45 meals and distributing 29 cleanup kits and 33 other emergency supplies to the disaster-impacted communities. These shelters were supported by 46 volunteers for 6,300 volunteer hours, and 11 employees for 1,340 employee hours. In total, the American Red Cross opened 30 cases and provided 25 cases with financial assistance.

Clackamas County Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters (CCVOAD) identified 23 cases with unmet needs caused by the incident. They have activated their Unmet Needs Roundtable to address the needs of affected residents on a case-by-case basis, while working to restore access to several private homes rendered inaccessible by a washed-out private road.

Regional impacts included downed trees and power lines from high winds, localized road closures from floodwaters and landslides, and associated infrastructure damages. More than 300,000 Oregonians were without power at the peak of the outages. Some areas were without power for over 4 days.

Power outages affected many jurisdictions during this event, including significant impacts to the following consumer-owned utilities:

- Consumers Power Inc.
- Central Lincoln People's Utility District
- Eugene Water and Electric Board
- Lane Electric Cooperative
- Tillamook People's Utility District
- Oregon Trail Electrical Coop
- Blachly-Lane Electrical Coop
- Emerald People’s Utility District

FEMA and the state reviewed and validated $5,381,559 in damages to public utilities, 39% of the total validated costs for this disaster, most of which are consumer-owned. This represents the largest portion of costs by percentage for this disaster, impacting seven out of the nine counties included in this request. Most of these costs were related to damage to the power transmission system, but significant costs for other utilities, including internet and sewer, were also incurred throughout the state. Tillamook People's Utility District had over 15,000 customers without power, some for over five days, due to the incident. If a disaster declaration is not made, many public utilities in the state will be required to increase rates for their consumers, particularly those in rural areas like Tillamook and Union Counties. Additionally, the costs to repair the water line for the city of Sheridan, home to Federal Correctional Institution Sheridan, a large, federally operated prison complex in Yamhill County, pose a significant challenge for the local jurisdiction to fund. Although these damages make up a relatively small proportion of the validated total, the impact to the city of Sheridan was severe, and the costs far exceed normal operations for the year for the jurisdiction.

Multiple road closures occurred due to hazardous conditions including major interstates and highways that were closed for up to 24 hours including Interstate 5, 84, Highway OR 138, OR 22, OR 224, OR 229, OR 260, OR 43, US 101, US 197, US 26, and US 97. Preliminary estimates for damage to Oregon's federal-aid highway system caused by this event exceed $64.7 million (Enclosure C).

FEMA and the state reviewed and validated $4,126,892 in damages to non-FHWA roads and bridges, 30% of the total validated costs for this disaster. Tillamook and Linn Counties had particularly high costs related to road repair, with approximately half of the statewide road damage costs being incurred in Tillamook County alone. Several roads that provide access to other critical infrastructure such as water treatment and sewage pumping facilities were damaged, making their expedient repair necessary to in turn make repairs to other critical infrastructure.

The severe winter storm conditions lasting from December 15 through December 21, 2025, dealt significant damage to roadways and public utilities. Insurance coverage and subsequent proceeds are extremely limited for these categories of damage. Tillamook County had the greatest per-capita damage, by far, out of all counties requested ($154.29 per person). Hood River and Lincoln counties also had extremely high per-capita damage amounts ($22.05 and $19.12, respectively). All three of these counties are rural, under-resourced and have relatively few resources at their disposal to complete vital repairs caused by this incident.

FEMA and the state reviewed and validated over $1,184,879 in debris removal costs, accounting for 9% of the total validated costs for this disaster. Most of the debris that was removed was woody debris from trees due to high winds, but soil deposited by landslides in the public right-of-way also presented significant cost impacts to local jurisdictions.

Counties incurred costs for several emergency protective measures, but overtime costs for first responders answering calls for service and emergency repairs to infrastructure made up the majority of the costs validated by the JPDA team. Final costs are expected to rise above this estimate as more payroll documentation is processed in the coming weeks. FEMA and the state reviewed and validated $1,028,175 in emergency protective measures costs, 8% of the total validated costs for this disaster.

The teams reviewed $50,075 in damage to water control facilities. The efforts of the Warning Coordination Meteorologists at the National Weather Service and Water Control Managers to forecast, respond to, and prevent downstream impacts from the unprecedented levels of precipitation on numerous high hazard dams greatly reduced the damage of this incident.

County-Level Impacts – Public Assistance

The damage and impacts from this event pose a significant challenge to the state of Oregon and its affected communities. The images of this devastation is best captured in our story map at 2025 December Severe Weather Spotlight, linked below. To support my Public Assistance (PA) request, I offer the following examples, listed by county, of the infrastructure damage and impacts from this event:

Clackamas
Heavy rains and high winds caused significant river flooding throughout the county, leading to road closures and significant quantities of debris deposited on public right-of-way county-wide. Portions of the county, including communities along the Clackamas, Molalla and Sandy rivers, were under Level 1 “Go Now,” Level 2 “Be Set” and Level 3 “Be Ready” evacuation orders due to dangerously high river levels closing roads and inundating homes. Emergency services throughout the county reported significant increases in calls for service, particularly for swift-water rescues, flooded vehicles and electrical hazards from downed power lines. High river levels also caused erosion, leading to the exposure of and damage to previously buried fresh and wastewater lines servicing the 170 residents of the community of Timberline Rim. Landslides caused road closures throughout the county.

During the PDA, FEMA and the State validated $3,382,592 in damages. Most of the costs were Category F Utilities and Category B Emergency Protective Measures, with a county per-capita indicator of $5.08.

Hood River

Hood River County experienced high winds and heavy rains that caused significant damage to both public roadways as well as county-owned parks and trail systems. Damage to county infrastructure caused by flooding included multiple culvert failures on county roads, bridge abutment erosion and impact failures on several trail bridges, and

washouts of previously maintained recreational infrastructure. Damage to the leachate lagoon at the Hood River County landfill threatened the county drinking water supply, requiring immediate stabilization and repairs. These damages present an economic risk to the county, whose tourism is closely tied to the unique outdoor recreation opportunities on offer across the county.

During the PDA, FEMA and the State were able to validate $528,633 in damages, with a county per capita of $22.05 per-capita, or over 4.5 times the county per-capita.

Lane

Lane County has experienced significant impacts on consumer-owned utilities. Over 40,000 residents of the county were without power for up to 48 hours, disrupting local commerce and impacting daily life. This resulted in disproportionately high per-capita costs for the county. Additionally, downed trees and power lines throughout the county presented a hazard to life safety and travel for the duration of the event.

During the PDA, FEMA and the State validated $1,946,747 in damages, the majority of which were Category F Utilities costs, with a county per-capita of $5.08.

Lincoln

High winds and heavy rainfall caused flooding and power outages throughout the county. Consumer-owned utilities experienced widespread disruptions in this county, with approximately 20,000 customers out of power as of December 18, 2025. Lincoln County experienced significant road damage to both on and off-system roads, including a landslide on Highway 229 that has closed the road for the foreseeable future.
A second atmospheric river in the weeks leading up to the incident period heavily impacted coastal areas, including Lincoln County. This second event, while not damaging enough to request a major disaster declaration, exhausted county resources and caused road damage throughout the county. This limited the county's ability to respond to the more severe event from December 15-21, 2025.

During the PDA, the state and FEMA were able to validate $967,784 in damages, at a per-capita of $19.20, nearly four times the county's FY26 per-capita.

Linn

High winds caused damage to publicly-owned electrical infrastructure, while flooding caused by heavy rains damaged a forestry office and state-maintained forest roads and bridges. The Oregon Department of Forestry removed significant quantities of woody debris blocking right-of-way on forest roads used for logging and other economic activities.

During the PDA, FEMA and the state were able to validate $642,769 in damages, or $5.00 per-capita.

Polk

Polk county experienced heavy rains that overwhelmed stormwater systems, damaged roads and road systems, and deposited debris jurisdiction wide. A culvert crossing a fish-bearing stream and road leading to a sewer pump station owned by the city of Salem was damaged by floodwaters and will trigger mandatory codes and standards upgrades upon repair.

During the PDA, FEMA and the State were able to validate $1,003,348 in damages, or a $11.46 per-capita, or over 2 times the county per-capita indicator.

Tillamook

Tillamook County experienced significant impacts due to the storm. Widespread flooding damaged roadways and culverts, utility damage led to approximately 15,000 people being out of power, and high winds deposited significant quantities of woody debris county-wide. These hazards presented a significant threat to public health and safety. High winds also caused significant damage to a historic blimp hanger owned and operated as an aviation museum by the Port of Tillamook Bay, which is now in danger of closing should a disaster not be declared. This would significantly impact tourism in the local area and would be a loss of American heritage felt deeply by the local community.

The city of Manzanita's water tower, which serves as the main source of water for the town of 600 year-round residents and hundreds of thousands of yearly visitors, was damaged due to land movement caused by heavy rains and required emergency stabilization. Several bridges and roads were damaged by high waters and woody debris deposited within waterways in the county. Tillamook County also experienced a second atmospheric river in the week leading up to the incident period, further straining county resources.

During the PDA, FEMA and the state were able to validate $1,541,300 in damages, or $154.29 per-capita, over 31 times the county per-capita indicator.

Union

Beginning on December 16, 2025, and continuing until December 19, 2025, electrical infrastructure maintained and operated by Oregon Trail Electrical Cooperative (OTEC) was heavily impacted by severe winds. Over 40 miles of line and 19 power poles were reported as being damaged or destroyed by the event. OTEC crews responded immediately to the outages and were able to restore power within three days. This event created a health, life, and safety emergency as many cooperative customers rely on power for their water pumps, livestock troughs, and heating for their homes.

During the PDA, FEMA and the state were able to validate $279,688 in damages, or $10.68 per-capita, or over two times the county per-capita indicator.

Yamhill

The city of Sheridan, a city of 4,600 residents, experienced a landslide and loss of integral ground under their water treatment plant and water main. This led to residents being without clean water for several days, severely impacting daily life and public hygiene. Additionally, the city is home to FCI Sheridan, which houses approximately 1,200 inmates. FCI Sheridan was without water for several days, which strained operations and disrupted activities within the facility.

During the PDA, FEMA and the state were able to validate $663,350 in damages to the water treatment plant or $6.16 per-capita.

Oregon Recent Disasters & Events

Prior to this event from approximately December 8-9, Oregon experienced record-breaking rainfall throughout the state that caused significant flooding and widespread infrastructure damage. Local jurisdictions were already heavily engaged in responding to power outages, road closures, and numerous landslides. These earlier storms strained personnel, equipment, and financial resources across multiple counties. Although the December storm event from December 8-9 did not individually meet the threshold for a Major Disaster declaration, its impacts cannot be viewed in isolation. The compounding effect of multiple severe weather systems striking Oregon in rapid succession throughout December 2025 has depleted local response capacity and exhausted already-limited budgets. This event was one in a series of damaging storms that created substantial operational and financial burdens for communities across the state

Oregon has responded to multiple state and federal disasters over the past two years that have adversely impacted many communities across the state. This includes 54 state-level emergency declarations for extreme drought, multiple severe winter storms, heavy rain, flooding, avalanches, landslides, and record-breaking wildfires.

Over the past two years, Oregon has also received three Stafford Act declarations, most recently for devastating Severe Storms, Flooding, Landslides, and Mudslides of March 2025 (FEMA-4881-DR), wildfires (FEMA-4854-DR) and winter storms (FEMA-4768-DR). In particular, many of the counties impacted by this event were also included in FEMA-4768-DR. Additionally, the Burns Paiute Tribe received a Stafford Act declaration August 28, 2023, as a result of severe storms, flooding, landslides, and mudslides (FEMA-4733-DR). Many affected areas are rural, with aging infrastructure, high poverty levels, and limited access to services.

Since 2023, Oregon has had 19 fires declared by FEMA under the Fire Management Assistance Grant Program (FMAGP), and 16 corresponding FMAGP-HMGP Programs to support post-wildfire mitigation activities. During the summer of 2024, I issued a statewide declaration of emergency and a record 17 Oregon Conflagration Act declarations for wildfires; with damages from those events leading to DR4854-OR being declared on January 1, 2025. The state still has significant work remaining in the process

of recovering from the 2024 wildfires. The existing burn scars in these areas further exacerbated the situation by adding additional runoff and creating large debris flows that impacted infrastructure from heavy rain and flooding.

In addition to these declared events, Oregon also experienced the Rowena Fire in Wasco County, located in the Columbia Gorge National Scenic Area in the summer of 2025. This event, while it did not rise to the level of a major disaster, was extremely impactful to the greater Columbia Gorge and the state's ability to respond to future events. Limited housing and sheltering opportunities available for survivors were greatly worsened after the fire, and significant state resources were expended to assist Wasco County in their recovery.

These events presented extreme costs to infrastructure and resources. I continue to be concerned about the limited resources for recovery in the rural areas impacted by this event and other recent past events.

Demonstrated Mitigation Effectiveness and Reduced County Indicator –
Tillamook County has experienced a measurable reduction in disaster impacts due to successful mitigation investments completed following previous Major Disaster Declarations. A key example is the Southern Flow Corridor project, funded as an alternate project under FEMA-1733-DR and completed in 2016. This project restored natural floodplain function by removing outdated levees, reconnecting 13–14 miles of tidal channels, and reestablishing tidal marsh habitat across approximately 4,800 acres. These mitigation actions have significantly reduced both flood levels and flood duration within the project area, directly lowering the county's exposure and overall indicator for flood-related damages. The project's effectiveness was validated during the October 2017 Wilson River flood, one of the largest on record, when water drained substantially faster than in comparable historical events. As a result, U.S. Highway 101 no longer experiences routine closures during flood events and more than 500 structures benefit from reduced flood risk. Since completion of this project, the county has reported significantly less impacts and participation in major disaster declarations.
Lane Electric Cooperative's mitigation efforts showed similar impact reduction across Lane County. Following the 2020 wind and fire storms (FEMA-4562-DR), Lane Electric leveraged 406 funding to bury power lines underground and reinforce those that could not be buried. Power outages across the county were substantially reduced in subsequent storms and the reduced damage enabled the organization to focus their limited resources on public safety and quick restoration of power in areas still affected by downed lines. Consumers Power Inc. completed similar work using 406 mitigation funding under FEMA-4599-DR, which has been so successful that Benton County was among the few to not exceed local capacity following the 2025 atmospheric river.
The performance of mitigation efforts demonstrated by Lane Electric Cooperative and the Southern Flow Corridor project underscores the value of prior federal mitigation investments and highlights Oregon's commitment to reducing subsequent long-term disaster costs. These outcomes directly support my directive to demonstrate how supplemental funding for resilient repairs allows counties to perform proactive and

effective steps to reduce vulnerability, even when they face impacts that exceed local capacity. Continued federal assistance is essential to maintain infrastructure resilience and address remaining unmet needs.

Request for Hazard Mitigation Program (HMGP)

The following section of this request letter provides additional evidence demonstrating the need for HMGP and why it is warranted in Oregon. I am requesting the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program under Section 404 of the Stafford Act be made available statewide to continue this cost and life-saving work, which strives to reduce future dependance on federal government aid after future events. Projects identified under this program will substantially reduce the risk of, or increase resilience to, future damage, hardship, loss, or suffering in any area affected by a major disaster as required under Section 404 of the Stafford Act.

Hazard Mitigation Assistance funding provided through post-disaster HMGP is instrumental in helping communities recover and build their ability to mitigate future damage and impacts. Section 404 through the Stafford Act allows communities to build back better while working to minimize or eliminate future disaster impacts and associate local, state, and federal costs.

Successful hazard mitigation projects protect lives and property and save the community money in the long run. FEMA estimates that for every dollar spent on hazard mitigation, up to six dollars are saved when disasters strike. Oregon communities were extremely impacted by this event. Without HMGP funding, these communities are more vulnerable to the impacts of natural disasters, leading to greater loss of life and property.

Oregon has a strong foundation in hazard mitigation, with a focus on proactive planning and community resilience. The state has strived to implement a strategic approach to hazard mitigation, leading the nation in mitigation planning. In support of this, Oregon has created several state funded mitigation assistance programs that provide grants for local hazard mitigation efforts, particularly in the wildfire prevention area and to support local jurisdictions by providing the cost share match for federal grants. Our track record is proof of the effectiveness of this grant program. Clackamas County was one of the first counties in the nation (2002) to have a Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan. Oregon was fourth in the nation in 2022 for HMGP funding, demonstrating its commitment to saving life and property. Oregon continues to prioritize mitigation through projects, planning, and mapping activities.

Since the 2020 wildfires, Oregon has intently captured success stories of how mitigation funds from previous disasters have saved those communities from future disasters. During the Spring Flood (DR-4881), an entire neighborhood in Cottage Grove was reportedly saved from the floodwaters due to a previous HMGP grant that focused on home elevations. Tillamook County continues to have minimal damage from flood impacts because of these successful mitigation efforts. Most of the state continues to

update its flood maps, working with land development and building codes to ensure safe and effective building outside the flood area, leading to direct reductions in real property losses from flooding.

In 2018, Oregon was one of many states to adopt a more stringent International Building Code (IBC), raising the standard of building codes throughout the state. In a 2020 study, FEMA found that stronger and updated building codes save lives, especially during flood events like the ones that occurred during this event.

The state's success is evident through its comprehensive Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan (NHMP), which guides risk reduction efforts across various sectors. The state's Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan (NHMP), which is regularly updated with input from state agencies, local communities, and stakeholders, helps identify and prioritize actions to reduce vulnerability to natural hazards. Oregon's approach emphasizes collaboration, with organizations like the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) and the State Interagency Hazard Mitigation Team (IHMT) playing key roles in plan development and implementation. Oregon's NHMP identifies and addresses a range of natural hazards, including coastal hazards, droughts, earthquakes, extreme heat, floods, landslides and wildfires. The plan recognizes that the degree of impact for each hazard varies across the state.

The State-FEMA Joint Preliminary Damage Assessment identified the following as potential mitigation projects that substantially reduce the risk of or increase resilience to future damage, hardship, loss, or suffering in any area affected by a major disaster, with local jurisdictions with shovel-ready mitigation concepts, plans in place, and are awaiting a path or funding for implementation:

Row River Valley District: Rural water system serving 103 households, two schools, one church and Lane County park, storm water –driven sediment and debris clogged inlet structures, forcing shutdown of the water plant and temporary cutting off water supply to the community for three days.

- Mitigation considerations: More rebuts and /or redundant intake screens, improved sediment /debris management at the upper basin, and protection from upstream pollution. The district has existing designs and is actively seeking grant funding to replace the upper five miles of their system.

Clackamas County Water Environment Services: Increased flows at treatment plants and pump stations. Power outages and physical damage to infrastructure required 24/7 operations to prevent sewage backflow and service disruption. The loss of 30-40 feet of riverbank exposed sewer force main and potable water main, which created an immediate risk of pipe failure and potential raw sewage discharge affecting approximately 300 homes.

- Mitigation consideration: The river channel has migrated approximately 111 feet; prior flooding in 2007 and 2011 and this event (third highest on record, ~100-year flood) indicates a recurring hazard. The peak flow reached approximately 45,000 CFS (vs. typical 15,000 CFS). Existing designs from a 2015 planning effort could support mitigation to stabilize banks, protect/relocate vulnerable mains, and harden access and treatment facilities.

City of Sheridan: Landslide physically displaced and pulled joints apart in the water tower distribution line, resulting in loss of normal water service.

- Mitigation consideration: City's repair alternatives include hillside and water tank stabilization, relocating the main water line, and permanent repairs to the distribution line.

In addition, the following are identified key points that demonstrate the necessity for HMGP:

- Without HMGP, the State Hazard Mitigation Officer will not be able to comply with the priorities outlined in FEMA's May 31, 2024, memo directing the states to prioritize buyouts and streambank restoration in adherence to the Biological Opinion, issued in the National Wildlife Federation v. National Marine Fisheries Service lawsuit. Additionally, without an ability to mitigate further flood disasters, communities will return to the floodway/flood fringe. This will lead to increased likelihood of both state and federal assistance being needed in subsequent flood disasters.
- HMGP projects in designated areas would focus on streambank restoration, buyout of homes in the floodway or flood fringe, elevation of homes to mitigate against future flooding, mapping and assessment actions for future planning efforts, and the ability to mitigate critical lifelines beyond what FEMA's Public Assistance program is able to do.
- Mitigation projects provide unique opportunities to discuss flood strategies and mitigation priorities through mapping, assessment, and planning activities. This includes educational outreach to communities about flood risk, flood damage, and mitigation ideas.
- HMGP could also be used to support studies of this flood event to determine its impact to the landscape of riverbanks and streams that overflowed, making communities more resilient while being informed with accurate data of potential future disasters. These studies could inform projects such as stream bank stabilization or landslide stabilization which have been eroded and unstable due to this flooding event.

FEMA Region X and Oregon have a good partnership processing 404 and 406 mitigation projects that maximize the efficiency of federal funding and assist in bigger, more resilient mitigation efforts. The following demonstrates Oregon success stores with FEMA Mitigation:

Lane County Utility Undergrounding

The mitigation team at the Oregon Department of Emergency Management (OEM) has successfully funded many projects in partnership with consumer-owned utilities to underground lines in particularly vulnerable locations throughout Lane County. Emerald People's Utility District, a participant in this Preliminary Damage Assessment, completed undergrounding of approximately 5.5 miles of line under DR-4432-HM. This undergrounding prevented repetitive damage to the same infrastructure that could have occurred during this event.

Upper Sandy River Flood Warning System

The Sandy River in Clackamas County reached moderate flood stage during this event, with several areas along the river under Level 2 and 3 evacuation notices. The flood warning system, funded through HMGP-FM5327 and completed in 2020, almost certainly saved lives. By providing early warning alerts to county officials, timely and specific evacuation orders were issued to residents, resulting in no fatalities in Clackamas County during this event.

Conclusion
Cost estimates and percentages for each category of total eligible Public Assistance are shown in Enclosure B of this letter. Initial damage assessments reported to the state showed an excess of $25,125,298 in damages.

In summary, Public Assistance assessed during the Joint PDA across the affected counties comprising this request are the following approximate dollar amounts organized by PA Category:

A. Debris Removal ($1,594,624)
B. Emergency Protective Measures ($1,112,605)
C. Roads and Bridges ($4,681,418)
D. Water Control Facilities ($50,075)
E. Buildings ($964,053)
F. Utilities ($6,608,120)
G. Parks & Other ($443,573)

Total estimate validated and concurred upon by the State and FEMA JPDA: $15,454,468.

Given the magnitude, duration, and widespread impacts of the December 2025 flooding, landslides, and severe storms, the state and its affected counties have exhausted available resources and lack the capacity to manage recovery without federal assistance. This disaster caused life-threatening conditions and severe infrastructure losses across the state. The scale of damage validated by joint assessments clearly demonstrates that

supplemental federal support is necessary. I respectfully request your approval of this Major Disaster declaration to deliver urgently needed assistance to affected Oregonians.

Your support allows us to restore essential services and help these communities rebuild resiliently.

To view an interactive story map on this event, see the following link: 2025 December Severe Weather Spotlight.

I appreciate your serious consideration of this request in support of Oregonians.

Sincerely,

Governor Tina Kotek

Enclosures

OMB No. 1660-0009/FEMA Form 010-0-13
A: Individual Assistance – N/A
B: Public Assistance
C: Requirements for Other Federal Agency Programs
D: Historic and Current Snowfall Data – N/A
E: National Weather Service Statement – December 2025 Atmospheric River Event