



THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR
WASHINGTON

SEP 22 2017

Memorandum

To: Heads of Bureaus and Offices
From: Secretary
Subject: 2017 Support for Hurricane Disaster Response and Recovery

Major Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria have seriously impacted the lives and property of countless Americans in the United States and Territories over the past 3 weeks. These storms have also impacted our employees who have lost or left their homes, Territories and their citizens, and park and refuge infrastructure. During times such as these, the Department of the Interior (Department) works closely with Federal, state, tribal, territorial, and local partners to meet our responsibilities to save and sustain lives, protect our assets, and to support the collective response and recovery effort.

I know the Department's emergency response personnel and resources are fully engaged. I also know you are near the end of the fiscal year and responding to fire emergencies across the country. Part of our mission is to lead the Nation's recovery efforts for natural and cultural resources across the impacted states and territories and to support the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Many of our employees have already stepped up and are working in support of various disaster response and recovery efforts across our bureaus and offices. The needs, however, continue to grow.

In addition to the significant challenges required for our own programs, the Department is now also being asked by our interagency partners to support additional staffing gaps and critical missions. These growing missions include support to FEMA's Surge Capacity Force and the Small Business Administration's (SBA) damage/loss verification program. While I am grateful for and thank the over 500 of our finest who have already volunteered for FEMA's surge, the need remains urgent. I am asking that all Department supervisors make your personnel immediately available for disaster assignments in support of these various missions to the maximum extent possible. The skill sets needed to support the disaster response and recovery efforts are varied. The SBA request, for example, may be met with our administrative and facilities support staff. If your personnel are not available to deploy, then they should support the hurricane response and recovery effort by providing backup for those who can.

This is an extraordinary time but we are an extraordinary Department. I thank you for your leadership, engagement, commitment, and service to assist our Nation in a great time of need.