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**Governor Bullock Announces Funding Available to Rebuild Montana
Communities Affected by a Severe Mid-April Snow Storm**

*Federal Emergency Management Agency grants funding request to help communities recover from
severe winter storm that occurred April 15 – 16, 2016*

HELENA – Governor Steve Bullock today announced that Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) funding has been made available to the State of Montana to support state, tribal, and local recovery efforts in the following counties affected by a severe winter storm and straight-line winds during the period of April 15-16, 2016:

- Glacier County
- Liberty County
- Pondera County
- Teton County
- Toole County

“Thanks to strong partnerships at the local, state, and federal level, these communities can get back on their feet and rebuild to become stronger and more sustainable, creating more opportunities for future economic growth and job creation,” said Governor Bullock.

On May 12, Governor Bullock requested FEMA evaluate the devastating effects of the storm and affirm the area as a major disaster eligible for a Presidential Major Disaster Declaration. Federal funding is now available to state, tribal, and eligible local governments and certain non-profit organizations on a cost-sharing basis for emergency work and the repair or replacement of facilities damaged by the severe winter storm and straight-line winds.

Montana’s congressional delegation last week [urged](#) FEMA to approve Governor Bullock’s funding request for federal resources to help the communities restore their infrastructure and way of life.

“With these job creating resources, families and communities across Montana can start to rebuild,” Tester said. **“I am proud we could work together at a state and federal level to ensure these communities will come back stronger than ever.”**

“I appreciate that the President has honored Montana’s request for assistance for our communities that have been impacted by severe winter weather,” U.S. Senator Steve Daines stated. “This will help our communities repair the damages and get folks back to work.”

"My heart goes out to all affected. I was happy to work with Senators Daines and Tester, and Goernor Bullock to get this relief funding for Montana communities,” said Representative Ryan Zinke. “ My office is standing by ready to help. Folks can call my Billings, Great Falls or Helena offices for help."

The [Stafford Act Declaration](#) allows the Federal Government to pay 75% of eligible repair and emergency work costs to eligible applicants including counties and rural electric co-ops. State and Local applicants are responsible for the remaining 25 %. The State is committed to providing 40% of this funding, with the balance as the responsibility of the affected jurisdictions and the Rural Electric Coops. This funding will alleviate the financial impact on the co-ops and ultimately customers.

The funding is not intended for individual applicants, it is for damages incurred to public and private non-profit infrastructure. Funding provided through this federal declaration may be used to cover costs above and beyond insurance payments and city/county mill levies.

The declaration came at the [request](#) of Governor Bullock on May 12, 2016. Governor Bullock issued an [Executive Order](#) declaring a disaster to exist in Glacier, Liberty, Pondera, Teton, and Toole Counties.

FEMA plans to have a small team of representatives in state over the next several weeks to assist applicants and process claims.

The combination of heavy, moisture-laden snow, gusty north winds and intense snowfall during April 15-16 resulted in severe impacts over portions of north-central Montana, specifically Glacier, Liberty, Pondera, Teton, and Toole counties. Widespread and significant impacts to travel, commerce, roadways, and infrastructure occurred. During its peak, electrical outages left approximately 21,622 residential and commercial customers without service. Utility companies suffered damage to at least 750 power poles, associated cross arms, distribution lines, and pole-mounted transformers. Pondera County suffered several miles of damage to primary and secondary roadways.

Thomas J. McCool has been named as the Federal Coordinating Officer for federal recovery operations in the affected area.

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