



Board Agenda Item 12.1

DATE: March 28, 2023

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBMITTED BY: Paul Nerland, County Administrative Officer/Emergency Services Director

SUBJECT: Resolution for 2023 Storm Mitigation

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Adopt Resolution proclaiming Emergency Services Director's authority regarding mitigation for 2023 storms.

Approval of the recommended action will proclaim the Emergency Services Director's authority as it relates to mitigation efforts to address damage from the 2023 storms. This item is countywide.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):

No viable options are available.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The recommended action is necessary to ensure the Emergency Services Director has specific authorities authorized by the Board as they relate to mitigation efforts for the 2023 storms.

DISCUSSION:

On March 2, 2023, the Emergency Services Director proclaimed the existence of a local emergency due to extreme weather conditions, power outages, unprecedented snowfall, limited ingress and egress to Fresno County residents in the mountain areas and foothills. California Government Code (GC), section (§) 8630 authorizes proclamation of a local emergency by your Board or by an official so designated by ordinance when your Board is not in session and cannot immediately be called into session. Fresno County Ordinance Code, Chapter 2.44, designates the County Administrative Officer as the Emergency Services Director. Pursuant to County Ordinance, your Board confirmed the proclamation of a local emergency on March 7, 2023 by ratifying the proclamation and adopting the resolution.

On February 23, 2023, a string of severe winter storms began impacting Fresno County, resulting in the damage and subsequent limited access of County and State roads. Ingress and egress for residents in the mountain and foothill communities of Fresno County are compromised due to record rain and snowfall, affecting multiple roads. The extraordinary amount of snow has overwhelmed available local resources and limited the ability of County road maintenance and operations to rapidly mitigate conditions. Forecasted weather, including subfreezing temperatures, additional rain and snowfall continued to threaten impacted areas of Fresno County. The uncontrolled snow-melt and run-off from historic snow amounts have overwhelmed water drainage systems and established watersheds, which has led to flash flooding, rockfall, mudslides, debris flows, and damages to roadways.

Additionally, the severe weather worsened conditions of peril to life and property from a previous Local Emergency that was proclaimed on January 9, 2023 and continued on February 28, 2023, for storms that began in December 2022.

Residents of the mountain and foothill communities were asked to shelter in place or evacuate in some areas due to long-term power outages and snow impacted roads. As result of the long-term power outages, Fresno County set up shelters in the City of Reedley and in the community of Prather. The Proclamations of Local Emergencies were required in order to seek the appropriate public assistance from the State and Federal agencies. Recent storms have been filling reservoirs resulting in high water releases into rivers and streams, causing stress to the levee system that protects community residents and property throughout Fresno County. The next phase of the local emergency is critical as all efforts are made to manage the historic amount of projected runoff from snowmelt and rain to maintain the safety of all residents and minimize damages to the community from potential flooding. This may require immediate action when threats become apparent.

Approval of the recommended action will provide the County Administrative Officer, acting as the Emergency Services Director specific authorities as they relate to mitigation efforts for the 2023 storm damage and related impacts from potential flooding. It shall also allow the Emergency Services Director to designate this authority to an individual within the Fresno County Disaster Council if needed.

REFERENCE MATERIAL

BAI #1, March 7, 2023
BAI # 27, February 28, 2023
BAI #1, January 13, 2023

ATTACHMENTS INCLUDED AND/OR ON FILE:

Resolution

CAO ANALYST:

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