

During its life cycle between August 20th and August 29th, Hurricane Irene caused widespread damage and at least 56 deaths as it moved through the Caribbean and along the East Coast of the United States in late summer of 2011. Its strength varied during its journey between a Category 1 and Category 3 scale, reaching New York's shores as a strong Category 1 storm. It was the first hurricane to make landfall in the United States since 2008 and proved to be the 5th costliest hurricane in US history.

Profile *of the* Storms

A NASA satellite map of Hurricane Irene approaching the US coastline

On August 24, 2011, the New York State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services, Office of Emergency Management activated the state's Emergency Operations Center in preparation for Hurricane Irene, which was on a path to make landfall in New York around August 28th. Governor Cuomo declared a State Disaster Emergency and requested that President Obama declare a Pre-Disaster Emergency Declaration for New York State to ensure that all state and federal assets were in place to protect lives and property.

At the governor's direction, state agencies and local governments met to plan coordinated response efforts. Disaster officials from New York State pre-deployed personnel, equipment and supplies across the state so that the hardest hit counties would have assistance throughout and immediately after the storm. The governor urged New Yorkers to prepare for the emergency and to look out for their neighbors, especially the elderly and disabled, in the event help was needed.

Hurricane Irene hit New York State on August 28. The storm especially devastated communities from the Catskills through the Schoharie and Mohawk Valleys, and up to the Keene Valley and Essex County. On August 31, 2011, President Obama issued a Major Disaster Declaration for New York State and the counties impacted by Hurricane Irene. (see a timeline on page 8).



Governor Cuomo convenes emergency cabinet meeting regarding Hurricane Irene on August 26, 2011

Just one week later, New York State was hit a second time by Tropical Storm Lee. Lee had formed in the Gulf of Mexico on September 2nd. Just before it moved over the State of Louisiana it was downgraded to a subtropical storm, though the system maintained its heavy rainfall as it moved through the central United States. The remnants of the system brought nearly a foot of rain to much of the Southern Tier of New York State causing widespread, devastating flooding. This resulted in a second Presidential Disaster Declaration and the beginning of recovery efforts that continue today and will continue for many years.

The impact of the storms was staggering. The effect of Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee resulted in over 390,000 ordered evacuations, 1,065,000 power outages and significant damage to water systems and critical infrastructure, including numerous bridges and roads. Additionally, approximately 10,000 patients from 11 hospitals, 26 long-term care facilities, and 25 adult care facilities were successfully evacuated and repatriated.

The storms proved to be the largest and most expensive natural disaster in the history of the state, with recovery costs second only to the 9/11 terror attacks. Overall, 38 counties across the state were impacted (see maps below) with an estimated \$1.5 billion dollars in FEMA public assistance costs. Over 33,000 citizens registered for individual federal assistance amounting to nearly \$156 million dollars to date. Another indicator of the magnitude of the storms is the fact that 74 Disaster Resource Centers (DRCs) were created during the recovery period, which is more than the number of DRCs mobilized for Hurricane Katrina (56), and a new record for the number of DRCs in New York State. Prior to Irene/Lee, the previous record for the number of DRCs opened in New York State was 17 for the June 2006 floods.



Neighborhood devastation in Prattsville

“I think that the level of preparedness and the coordinated response efforts were extraordinarily good, better than we’ve seen in a long time as far as the state government is concerned. I think the governor really took a personal interest in how this was playing out, what the level of response and preparedness would be, and I think he did whatever that needed to be done.”

- Irwin Redlener, Director of Columbia University’s National Center for Disaster Preparedness

(As reported in the Ithaca Journal, September 21, 2011 by Jon Campbell, reporter)

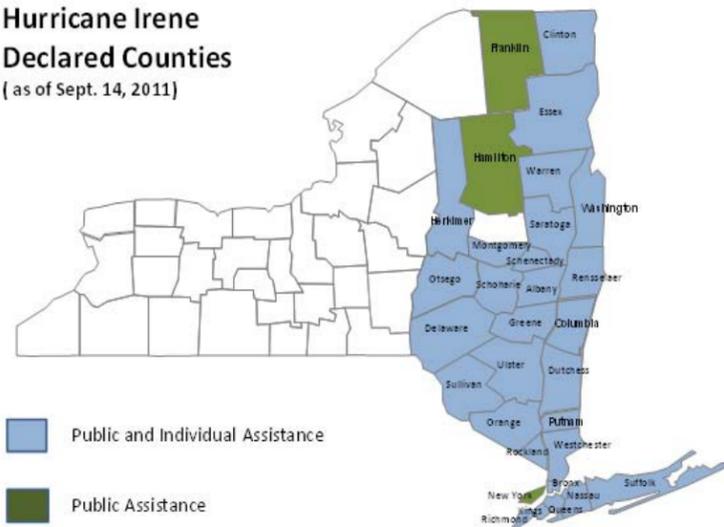


Flood waters cover a stretch of highway in Owego

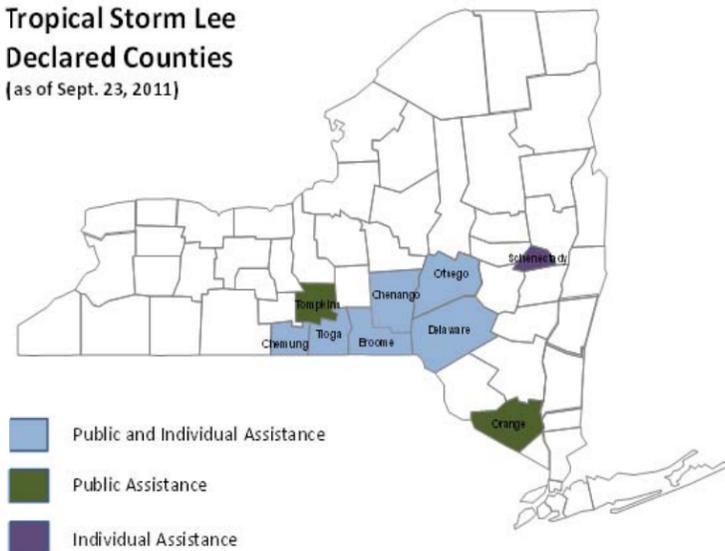
Mobilizing after the Storms

Disaster Declarations Throughout the State:

Hurricane Irene Declared Counties
(as of Sept. 14, 2011)



Tropical Storm Lee Declared Counties
(as of Sept. 23, 2011)



New York State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services responded to the immediate needs of citizens during the storms. Across the state, swift water and air rescue teams rescued nearly 1,000 individuals, including some as fast-rising flood waters overtook their homes. Combined, over 1,700 State Police, 3,200 National Guard members, and 600 fire related resources were deployed. 198 shelters housed over 18,000 citizens. The New York State Incident Management Team deployed to Schoharie County and established a Command Post at the Schoharie County Fair Grounds, which enabled quick and efficient coordination between federal, state and local officials. New York received additional Emergency Management Assistance Compact support from 17 states across the nation.

In the aftermath of the storm, Governor Cuomo visited the affected communities to offer the cooperation of the state government in recovery. At the governor’s request, Homeland Security Secretary Napolitano and FEMA Administrator Fugate visited the region with the governor to ensure they could see first-hand the assistance needed and to coordinate assistance delivered.

The statewide response to Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee spanned nearly three months and represented one of the largest operations in New York State history. Over 300 personnel from over 40 agencies manned the State Emergency Operations Center through the end of September 2011.



Governor Cuomo joins in the "Labor for Your Neighbor" cleanup effort over Labor Day weekend in Margaretville

Labor for Your Neighbor

In response to the many offers New Yorkers generously made to assist their neighbors in need, Governor Cuomo launched "Labor for Your Neighbor," a Labor Day weekend effort to tap into the good neighbor instincts of New Yorkers and rally volunteers to pitch-in on local clean-ups of public and private property following the devastation of the hurricane. The Governor and members of his family joined thousands of New Yorkers who turned out to help their neighbors, bringing tools, elbow grease and volunteers to the Schoharie Valley, Catskills and North Country, where the storm brought extensive damage. Volunteers were shuttled into villages and provided assistance in cleaning out homes and other buildings, shoveling mud from basements and removing debris. For those who could not contribute their physical labor, the governor urged New Yorkers to help their neighbors by contributing goods or financial donations.

Department of State Code Enforcement and Administration - Disaster Response Unit

In response to the governor's emergency declaration, all levels of state government were prepared for the storms and were in a position to respond once they hit New York. For example, the Department of State Division of Code Enforcement and Administration (DCEA) created and led a program that paired DCEA staff with 95 volunteer municipal code enforcement officials to assist communities with the task of evaluating flood damaged buildings. The volunteers were deputized as Assistants to the Secretary of State in accordance with the Governor's Executive Order declaring a State Disaster Emergency. The designation enabled local code enforcement volunteers to perform rapid building assessments in neighborhoods outside of their jurisdiction under the protection of state coverage. Assessments performed under this program helped affected communities to apply for federal and state disaster relief funding. Initial requests for assistance were received through the Office of Emergency Management as part of the state's coordinated response. As a result of this program, DCEA and local volunteers evaluated approximately 13,000 buildings in eight counties over a period of 17 days.

Ensuring Rapid Response for Insurance Claims

The governor directed Department of Financial Services (DFS) Superintendent Benjamin Lawsky and his department to help New Yorkers with their insurance claims. DFS put all companies that sell homeowners' and auto insurance on alert to be prepared to handle claims. DFS participated by providing assistance at the local emergency operations centers and sent the Department's mobile unit and staff to the hard hit areas to provide on the spot advice and assistance to consumers. When state officials heard the many complaints from citizens and business owners about insurers who were slow to respond in handling their claims, DFS intervened to get New York property insurance companies to follow New York's rules for fairness and promptness when servicing customers with federal flood insurance.

Voices of Resilience

Personal Stories of New Yorkers Affected by the Storm



Sue Ihlo is the owner of the Cheese Barrel in Margaretville in Delaware County. She remembers how everyone was surprised by the ferocity of the storms of 2011.

"We knew the storm was going to be bad," she says, "but it was worse. We got everything out of the basement in preparation for the storm, but the rain just didn't stop. Just to see the destruction of it, to see one of the other businesses in town gutted out, the hay bales going down the road, it was really hard. The tenants in my building had to get out, the fire trucks had to come with their rescue boats."

The real scope of the destruction became clear when Sue returned after the storm had passed. "Coming into the store was incredible – the mud and the sludge," she says. "The water was higher than expected. Everything I had tried to bring upstairs to protect it from the flood toppled over."

The cleanup by Sue and her family and friends to remove the debris from the store was soon interrupted by emergency personnel. "The other nearby buildings had shifted," she explains, "and we had to leave our store. We had a half hour to get whatever we wanted out of the building."

We tried to salvage everything we could – coolers, everything. We even moved out some sinks. Then we just sat and waited. We weren't allowed to come back into our building for two weeks. During that time, the mold started to grow."

The recovery was very challenging. "The mud and the sludge had started to eat away at everything," she says. "I had a contractor come in to finish the demolition. All the walls, the ceilings and floors had to come out. We started gutting things, getting insulation out. My insurance only covered four feet and up."

"The state helped me as a business. If that didn't come through, I wouldn't have been able to open"

-Sue Ihlo
Owner, The Cheese Barrel

The government relief Sue received was an important ingredient in helping her bounce back. "The state helped me as a business," she says. "I received \$20,000 for structural damage, which helped tremendously. If that didn't come through, I wouldn't have been able to open. It helped a lot and made a big difference."

Now Sue is back in business, and the community around her is making strides as well. "I opened a week before Memorial Day," she says. "The supermarket came back a week later. I told the owner we were in a race. Everyone is just bouncing back. The state relief has helped the community and given me more trust in government. I've done a lot of the flowers in the village – it helps lift up people. Some people, especially tourists, come in, and they don't even know we had been through a flood. We're all just working together to help each other because we all know what we've been through."



The street in front of the Cheese Barrel in Margaretville becomes a river during the flood.

Timeline



A damaged supermarket in Margaretville

Keeping the Empire State Open for Business

Countless businesses were assisted in the aftermath of the historic storms. Working with local officials, the state was able to help in retaining almost 2,400 jobs from just two companies alone.

Amphenol Aerospace, a company that had been severely impacted by Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee was contemplating leaving New York, and taking with it over 950 local jobs. However, the company has remained in Sidney, Delaware County, after receiving a business assistance and retention package of approximately \$34 million from the state. Amphenol Aerospace, a division of Amphenol Corporation, is one of the world's largest manufacturers of interconnect products for the military, commercial aerospace, and industrial markets.

The incentive package was funded by Empire State Development and New York State Homes and Community Renewal's Office of Community Renewal.

Additionally, BAE Systems, a global defense, security, and aerospace company, kept its operations in the area due to state support and assistance, retaining its 1,350 employees in the Southern Tier. (See BAE's Voices of Resilience story on page 12.)

Voices of Resilience



Leslie Price is the owner of J. Lacy Hair Salon, with locations in Schoharie and Middleburgh. She experienced devastating destruction from the storms.

"You can't imagine what the salon was like," she remembers. "My salon in Schoharie was completely destroyed. Things that were in the front were slammed into the back, things that were in the back were in the front. You couldn't make heads or tails of anything. There was 4 feet of water in the salon that ruined everything. Mud was splattered everywhere. I had just

refurbished it in March, now it was mud, silt and stench. My salon in Middleburgh had antiques, a massage room, a waxing room, and that one was destroyed too with all the equipment."

Leslie also had to contend with severe damage to her home. "We slid through the mud to see my one-floor house with eight foot ceilings that had 7'6" of Category Three water, which can have oil and other contaminants; it's the worse flood water there is," she explains. "The house's back walls were disconnected from the foundation. Six

"If it wasn't for the grants, I don't know where I'd be. I am reopening the salon on Tuesday, August 28th, a year to the day of the event, and better than ever."

-Leslie Price
Owner, Lacy Hair Salon

times I had water pumped out of the house to separate water from fuel oil. The house was finally torn down in September 2011 in order to rebuild."

The damage in the town of Schoharie was equally catastrophic. "The silt was just terrible, and the odor in the village was horrific and nauseating – like propane mixed with fuel oil and mud and crude," she describes. "My mind was boggled by it all."

"Financially, I lost everything I had worked my whole life for," she says tearfully. "After the initial shock, you start putting together, 'What do I do now?' I emptied my retirement savings. I sold what little jewelry and mismatched gold I had. I personally had

no idea where to go."

Fortunately, the state was able to help Leslie recover. "I received \$20,000 that all went to the salon," she explains. "The front of the business was pushed out and had to be replaced. I got the air conditioning unit repaired, and replaced the tanning booth. The place was gutted to the floor joist. I just paid off the furnace guy. If it wasn't for the grants, I don't know where I would be."



The destroyed interior of the J. Lacy Salon in the immediate aftermath of the floods.

"I was very pleased that the state came through," Leslie says. "I think the governor and the state handled it well. I was promised the money, I was counting on it and I was very elated when it was in the account."

Leslie continues to get back on her feet and is rightfully proud of the progress she has made. "I keep going forward, you can't look backward," she says. "I am in a FEMA trailer on my property, and I am reopening the salon on Tuesday August 28th, a year to the day of the event, and better than ever."

Overview of Storm Relief



A volunteer delivers bottled water

New York Assists Individuals and Families

Disaster Emergency Furnace Program (HEAP)

Objective: To assist households with heating or hot water emergencies.

Recipients: Owner-occupied households below 60 percent of state median income.

Weatherization Assistance Program

Objective: To improve energy efficiency by making home improvements (insulation, weather stripping and health and safety repairs) or assisting with refrigerator and appliance replacement.

Recipients: Households that earn less than 60 percent of state median income. Both homeowners and tenants are eligible. Items are selected based on an energy audit and must have 1 to 1 savings to investment ratio.

Tioga Opportunities used funds from the HEAP Disaster Emergency Furnace Program, and from its existing allocations in the Weatherization Assistance Program to serve disaster victims in Broome and Tioga Counties. They have continued prioritizing disaster victims in WAP during their 2012 contract. Tioga utilizes an in-house crew of local workers, supplemented by subcontractors, to make energy efficiency repairs with WAP funds. Improvements include furnace, hot water tank and refrigerator replacement, weather stripping, air sealing, insulation and window replacement. Additionally, federal WAP regulations permit health and safety repairs when necessary for energy work. The agency has been leveraging other resources to make additional home repairs, including private

United Way donations, NYSERDA Empower funding and federal housing funds in partnership with organizations like First Ward Action Council and Opportunities for Chenango. They have accepted referrals from Metro Interfaith, the Binghamton Housing Authority and local Offices for the Aging. Tioga Opportunities participates in the Broome County COAD and Tioga Area Resource Partners, and is assisting the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee or "Green Shirts" in completing an assessment of needs related to storm damage in Broome and Tioga County.

Community Service Block Grant (CSBG) Disaster Relief

Objective: To provide low-income families and individuals with lost household items, replace food in food pantries and provide emergency housing, food, clothing, transportation, medical assistance and safe drinking water.

Recipients: Local community action agencies in 13 counties.

Examples of how these funds are helping families get back on their feet include:

- **Schoharie County** - The Schoharie Community Action Program Inc. (SCCAP) was awarded CSBG funds by the Department of State to provide basic services including housing, transportation and food assistance to underserved communities. Many of the people to whom SCAAP provided services lost their homes to flooding, and needed emergency housing assistance. SCAAP helped identify safe, affordable temporary housing and provided short-term financial assistance for upfront costs for lodging. They also supplied consumers with food and gas cards to enable them to get to and from work and the grocery store.

- **Essex County** - The Adirondack Community Action Programs, Inc (ACAP) is using CSBG funds awarded by the Department of State to help 150 families who lost their homes to relocate. ACAP also provided cribs, bedding, diapers and other essentials for infants and babies. Some towns made food shelters available and ACAP helped to fill in the gaps and provided food for those in need, as well as assistance to those who lost furniture, washers, dryers and beds.

Breakdown of Assistance by County

| Primary Recipient | Broome | Delaware | Essex | Greene | Orange | Schoharie | Tioga |
|--------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Individuals and Families | \$3.8 m | \$0.7m | \$0.2 m | \$1.2 m | \$1.8 m | \$1.2 m | \$2.0 m |
| Businesses | \$2.2 m | \$0.8 m | \$0.3 m | \$1.3 m | \$0.7 m | \$1.6 m | \$1.3 m |
| Farms | \$0.4 m | \$0.1 m | \$0.2 m | \$0.4 m | \$1.9 m | \$1.8 m | \$0.8 m |
| Municipalities | \$19.6 m | \$8.2 m | \$3.8 m | \$9.1 m | \$14.0 m | \$26.5 m | \$14.5 m |
| Transportation Costs | \$4.9 m | \$2.3 m | \$6.6 m | \$33.0 m | \$8.7 m | \$10.8 m | \$3.5 m |
| Environmental Projects | \$1.7 m | \$0.7 m | \$1.5 m | \$1.7 m | \$2.0 m | \$6.3 m | \$2.3 m |
| TOTAL | \$32.6 m | \$12.8 m | \$12.6 m | \$46.7 m | \$29.1 m | \$48.2 m | \$24.4 m |

- **Rensselaer County** - Commission on Economic Opportunity for the Greater Capital Region (CEO) used the funding to provide those in need with housing, clean drinking water, prepackaged meals and beds. CEO has also been providing advocacy, ongoing case management and assistance in linking members of the community to other resources.

- **Ulster County** - The Ulster County Community Action Committee provided warm meals, clean drinking water, temporary housing and rental assistance, generators, home cleaning supplies, flashlights and batteries and vouchers which could be used at local businesses for clothing, bedding, shoes and school supplies.

- **Orange County** - Two community action agencies, Newburgh Community Action Committee, Inc. and Regional Economic Community Action Program, Inc., provided emergency medical services, school supplies, emergency transportation, shelter and other direct services.

- **Montgomery/Fulton Counties** - The Fulmont Community Action Agency provided families with clean clothes, clean water, bagged lunches and emergency transportation to and from work, the grocery store or the doctor.



Governor Cuomo and local and national officials comfort residents of Prattsville

State Storm Aid Overview

| Primary Recipient | Number of Programs | Total Awarded Statewide |
|---|--------------------|-------------------------|
| Individuals and Families | 5 | \$31.6 m |
| Businesses | 2 | \$10.1 m |
| Farms | 4 | \$9.9 m |
| Municipalities | 3 | \$194.4 m |
| Transportation Costs* | N/A | \$297 m |
| * = Some costs to be federally reimbursed | | |
| Environmental Projects | 3 | \$31.2 m |
| TOTAL | 17 | \$574.2 m |



Flood waters take over North Avenue in Owego

Household Appliance Rebate Program

Objective: To help residents cover the costs of replacing vital household appliances and equipment that were damaged by the storms. Rebates were a fixed amount for each appliance/equipment and could cover up to 100 percent of the costs of a purchase.

Recipients: Residents in 45 counties replaced 808 refrigerators, 1,645 clothes washers, 1,456 clothes dryers, 1,307 dehumidifiers, 697 hot water heaters (gas, electric and heat pump), 441 furnaces and 346 boilers.

Food Stamps - Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (D-SNAP)

Objective: To provide immediate assistance to ensure families did not go hungry in the wake of the storm.

Recipients: Individuals or families who lost food, their home, their job, access to their bank or had disaster-related expenses not expected to be eligible for reimbursement.

NYS Direct Aid Programs

| Program | Projected Program Total |
|---|-------------------------|
| Disaster Emergency Furnace Repair (HEAP) | \$2.4 m |
| Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) | \$3.8 m |
| CSBG Disaster Relief (DOS) | \$890 k |
| Household Appliance Rebate Program (NYSERDA) | \$6.8 m |
| Food Stamp Benefit (OTDA) | \$17.8 m |
| State and Local Shares of FEMA Aid | \$186.4 m |
| Neighborhood Rebuilding Corps. (DOL) | \$7.1 m |
| Community Recovery Grants (DOS) | \$878 k |
| Agriculture Disaster Energy Efficiency Program (PSC, NYSERDA) | \$2.1 m |
| ACRF – Soil and Water Conservation | \$4.6 m |
| ACRF – Farm Operation Match | \$2.3 m |
| ACRF – Capital On-Farm Needs | \$197 k |
| ACRF – Main Street Business Assistance | \$3.0 m |
| Business Flood Recovery Grant Program (ESD) | \$7.8 m |
| Hurricane Emergency Loan Program - HELP (EFC) | \$15.2 m |
| Flood Mitigation Grant Program (DEC) | \$9.0 m |
| NRCS Emergency Watershed Protection program – Local Match | \$6.9 m |

Voices of Resilience

BAE Systems, a global defense, security, and aerospace company, saw its Main Street facility in Johnson City in Broome County sustain major flood damage in the aftermath of Hurricane Irene. At the height of the flooding, BAE officials report the plant was inundated with 16 million gallons of water. Damages ran in the tens of millions of dollars, with some of the plant's custom-made machinery destroyed.

“Our ability to recover our business in the Southern Tier would not have been possible without the state’s involvement.”

**-Dan Gobel
President, BAE Systems
Controls, Inc.**

The company announced in October 2011 that it would not be returning to the Johnson City facility and was looking to relocate. Losing the company in the region would have meant a staggering impact on the local economy, families, communities and school districts as BAE is one of the largest employers in the area.

To assist BAE in remaining local, the state put together an incentive package of \$40 million in job and investment-related tax credits over a five-year period. BAE Systems Vice President and General Manager of Electronic Systems Dan Gobel said, “BAE Systems was fortunate to find a great partner in New York State following the devastation to our Johnson City facility.” Thanks to the state support and assistance, BAE relocated its facility just seven miles away to nearby Endicott, New York, keeping its operations in Broome County and retaining its 1,350 employees in the region.

Dan Gobel, President, BAE Systems Controls, Inc., said, “We are grateful to Governor Cuomo, Lieutenant Governor Duffy, and the entire economic development team for the diligence with which they have supported us in the wake of the flooding. Our ability to recover our business in the Southern Tier would not have been possible without the state’s involvement.”

The BAE support was in addition to over \$50M in state flood aid to the region that included: grants to small businesses, farms and non-profits; flood mitigation and control projects; and property tax relief to homeowners. While signing a law at Greater Binghamton Airport in December 2011 to provide relief to communities devastated by the storms, Governor Cuomo said, “We must continue to work to make sure all those who were hit hard by these storms have the resources they need.”



BAE's flooded facility in Johnson City, NY

New York Assists Businesses

Main Street Business Assistance Program

Objective: To help address the immediate needs of local businesses, including the rehabilitation, rebuilding and/or restoration of flood-damaged commercial buildings in communities across Upstate New York.

Recipients: 6 counties (\$500k each) to assist businesses/buildings with reimbursement of interior and exterior repairs to structural damage caused by the storms, and to repair and/or replace permanent fixtures and equipment, as well as inventory and working capital losses caused by the storms.

Business Flood Recovery Grant Program

Objective: To provide grants to eligible small business, not-for-profit organizations, farms or owners of multiple dwellings that sustained direct physical flood-related damage. Grants provided 50% of the eligible loss not to exceed \$20,000 and could be used for storm-related repairs and restoration of structures, and for other storm-related costs, which either have not or will not be compensated by any other federal, state or local recovery program or any third-party payors. Losses are actual and direct physical flood related damage to structures or items used in an applicant’s business operation.

Recipients: To date, 580 grants worth \$7.9 million have been made in 31 counties to businesses, owners of multi-family dwellings, not-for-profits and farms.



Governor Cuomo with Secretary of Agriculture Vilsack, Senator Gillibrand and other officials on a flood-affected farm in Middleburgh

New York Assists Farms

Agriculture Disaster Energy Efficiency Program

Objective: To return farms to productive and viable operations by replacing electric and natural gas systems damaged in the storms with new energy efficient systems.

Recipients: Farms in 20 counties are receiving incentives for replacing and repairing systems such as: milking parlor pumps, motors and compressors on dairy farms; lighting, heating and ventilation in greenhouses; and irrigation systems and cold storage on vegetable farms.

Agricultural and Community Recovery Fund – Soil and Water Conservation

Objective: Conservation component of this funding was provided to the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets as emergency funding for soil and water districts to assist in rehabilitating farmland damaged by natural disasters and prevent further degradation of natural resources through the implementation or repair of Emergency Conservation Best Management Practices.

Recipients: Eligible counties evolved over the course of the two disasters and encompassed 29 in total including Albany, Broome, Chemung, Chenango, Clinton, Columbia, Delaware, Dutchess, Essex, Greene, Herkimer, Lewis, Montgomery, Oneida, Orange, Otsego, Putnam, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schenectady, Schoharie, Suffolk, Sullivan, Tioga, Ulster, Warren, Washington

and Westchester counties. For land to be eligible, the natural disaster must have created new conservation problems.

Agricultural and Community Recovery Fund – Farm Operation Match

Objective: To provide emergency funding to assist flood-affected farms to address costs of replacing lost crops intended to feed livestock, and crops to meet the obligations of Community Supported Agriculture (CSAs), farm stands and farmers participating in farmers markets.

Recipients: 210 farms/farm operations in 23 counties.

Agricultural and Community Recovery Fund – Capital-on-Farm Needs

Objective: To provide funding for capital losses. Eligible costs included certain minor structural repairs, permanent fixtures and equipment.

Recipients: A total of 18 farms in 11 counties received assistance.

Voices of Resilience

David Lloyd is the co-owner of Maple Downs Farm II in Middleburgh, Schoharie County. When the storms of 2011 hit, his farm faced a literal life-and-death crisis. “We had 8 feet of water all across the farm,” he describes. “The flood water came in in less than half an hour’s time. We lost a whole year’s worth of stored feed, 200 acres of standing corn and 47 head of dairy cattle, mostly young ones, out of about 300 total. All of our equipment was under water – 9 tractors, our car, we lost three trucks. It was devastating.”

back. “The state stuck with us,” he says, “and really put the effort in. I hear good comments from my neighbors about the state, that it did a good job, and was definitely a help in getting things back going.”

The funding from New York State not only helped David rebuild, but was the lifeline that helped the farm survive the year. “We lost a year’s worth of stored feed in inventory, a loss that was over \$450,000,” he says. “We qualified for relief from the state that helped us buy a portion of the feed to get us through the winter. We were also able to get state funds to pay for part of the expenses toward getting driveways and roadways back, putting the fence back in shape and replacing some of our damaged equipment.”

One year later, David sees the Middleburgh community as well on the road to recovery. “We are in pretty good shape here,” he describes. “Our town has pretty much recovered. Our elected officials in Albany are out there working hard to get things going. There was about \$1 million damage to our roads, but the town is pretty much



back in shape. Many businesses are up and running. Middleburgh looks very good, and attitudes for the most part are that things are good.”

David needed to take extreme efforts to manage the aftermath and keep his farm going. “The dairy barn was out of commission for a period of time, so we had to move our dairy cows to another location,” he remembers. “It took a period of time to work things out with the insurance companies, so it took a little while to rebuild.”

“I was real impressed. The state did a lot, and did it pretty quick. The state stuck with us, and really put the effort in.”

**-David Lloyd
Co-owner, Maple
Down Farms II**

David was very pleased at how quickly the state sprung into action with help. “The state was awesome,” he says. “The governor was out in the community within a week of the flood, and did a lot through this whole thing. The agriculture commissioner was on the farm twice. Things happened, I was real impressed. The state did a lot, and did it pretty quick.”

David was also appreciative that the state didn’t just pay attention to the community right after the storm, but sustained its involvement for as long as it took to come



Flood waters inundate the dairy barn at Maple Down Farms II

New York Assists Municipalities

Non-Federal Share of FEMA Public Assistance

Community Development Block Grant Disaster Relief

In the wake of Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee, along with other disasters that occurred nationwide in 2011, the U.S. Congress appropriated \$400 million for disaster relief in the form of Community Development Block Grants Disaster Relief (CDBG DR). New York State will receive a total of \$93 million in CDBG DR funding, more than any other state. Orange County and the Town of Union will receive funds directly from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, \$11.2 million and \$10.1 million respectively. The New York State Office of Housing and Community Renewal will receive funds totaling \$71.7 million which will be used to assist in meeting the non-Federal share of FEMA projects.

Neighborhood Rebuilding Corps

Objective: To hire temporary workers to assist in the recovery effort by restoring public infrastructure and services and providing humanitarian assistance to victims of the disaster.

Recipients: 17 counties received grants, and as of May 2012, 445 participants had been enrolled.

Community Recovery Strategy Grants

Objective: Assist communities with the most flood damage and least capacity to recover on their own by developing a strategy for how they will rebuild and reduce their vulnerability to future flood events. Community recovery strategies: identify specific rebuilding projects; prioritize projects that have the most significant recovery value and can be accomplished in the short term and long term; and include an implementation strategy that identifies next steps for implementing priority projects, including funding sources.

Recipients: 18 towns and villages (or counties or not-for-profits applying on their behalf) receiving \$877,796.



The official reopening of Route 73 after it was washed away by Hurricane Irene

New York Repairs Highways and Bridges

As a result of Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee, more than 400 road segments and bridges were closed on the State highway system. In addition, every major rail route in eastern New York was severed by flooding and washouts.

Within ten days of each event, the State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) had re-opened more than 80 percent of those closed roads and bridges – many of those ahead of schedule – and continued work on the infrastructure that suffered the most extensive damage and required significant reconstruction. In March, 2012, NYSDOT received the Award of Merit from the American Council of Engineering Companies of New York for its extraordinary response to Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee.

Total costs for the transportation storm response was \$297 million, incurred among NYSDOT, the New York State Thruway Authority and Canal Corporation, New York State Bridge Authority (NYSBA) and the Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA). The agency work breaks down as follows:

NYSDOT: DOT spent more than \$116 million on highway and bridge repairs at 945 locations statewide as a result of the extensive damage caused by the storms. Approximately \$108 million of this amount is eligible for federal reimbursement through the Federal Highway Authority (FHWA) and FEMA.

Thruway: The Thruway Authority and Canal Corporation spent a combined \$123,002,139 cleaning up in the aftermath of the storms, and performed clean up and reconstruction operations in Greene, Orange, Rockland, Suffolk, Westchester, Albany, Columbia, Ulster, Montgomery, Schoharie, Schenectady, Herkimer and Tioga counties. Combined, the agencies expect reimbursements from FEMA and FHWA in the amount of \$93,477,341. Specifically, the Thruway Authority spent \$9,007,632

“The fresh asphalt is still sticky. But two lanes of Route 73 from Interstate 87’s Exit 30 to Keene Valley are open...”

Three massive washouts, five cavernous holes plus 24 other damaged areas and ruined shoulders are repaired. It took seven days, 27 contractor trucks, 150,000 tons of stone and round-the-clock attention with daily reports to Cuomo, but the job is done...

‘[O]n Labor Day, the governor said it would take 10 days; that was seven days ago. It’s amazing,’ [Firefighter Ron] Konowitz said of the expeditious work. ‘I just can’t believe how they fixed it.’”

- Press-Republican (Plattsburgh), September 13, 2011 (Kim Smith Dedam, reporter)

and expects \$7,981,461 in federal reimbursement, and the Canal Corporation spent \$113,994,507 and expects \$85,505,880 in federal reimbursement.

Bridge Authority: The NYSBA spent \$48,810 for Irene storm costs related to monitoring, response and repair across its five vehicle bridge facilities in Rockland, Westchester, Putnam, Orange, Ulster, Dutchess, Columbia and Greene counties. All costs were expended in 2011 from Bridge Authority operating funds, generated from toll revenue. Seventy-five percent of the cost (\$36,607) was reimbursed in 2012 by FEMA funds specifically designated for Hurricane Irene assistance.

MTA: The MTA spent \$59.6 million of operating funds for storm costs. This includes \$25.3 million by Metro-North Rail Road, \$17.3 million by New York City Transit, \$8.9 million by Bridges and Tunnels, \$5.9 million by Long Island Rail Road, \$1.6 million by MTA Bus Company, \$311,000 by Long Island Bus, \$185,000 by MTA Headquarters and \$150,000 by Staten Island Railway. FEMA will reimburse the MTA for most of the costs, but amounts are still being determined.

Voices of Resilience

Sam Gil is the owner of Sam’s Country Store – what his website describes as “a convenient and modern store and gas station with a small town heart in a great American community” – Fleischmanns in Delaware County.

Sam talks about how no one could be prepared by what they encountered with last year’s storms: “We were expecting high winds, but no one was expecting water. On Saturday before Irene came through, we put away anything that could get blown or fly away. Between 8:00 - 9:00 AM on Sunday, all of sudden we saw water come in from all over, without any warning. People who were eating breakfast left right away, we closed the store, and took off. By 6:00 – 7:00 we came back, to see how everything was. With all the water running on Main Street, all the trees that were down, I couldn’t get to the store at all. When I came back Monday, everything was knocked down and water damaged, and we had all this mud inside the store and outside on the parking lot.”

“The state did an amazing job providing for people’s needs. All of the relief has been helping out a lot.”

-Sam Gil
Owner, Sam’s
Country Store

Sam categorized the damage he saw as “shocking.” “When you see a movie about Afghanistan, a country that is at war, everything that is destroyed – Fleischmanns looked like that,” Sam says. “Cars on top of cars, a car on top of a tree, trees down on Main Street, mountains of dirt and debris. When you go through something like this, you scratch your head, and can’t imagine it happened. You’ve seen it on TV in other places, but it is completely different when you live through it.”

Sam admits that at times it was challenging to stay determined. “I felt knocked down,” he says. “There were moments I wanted to walk away. But once you

settle down, you realize other people have gone through things like this, people recover, people get back on their feet. We are not going to be the exception.”

“They say what doesn’t kill you makes you stronger, and I can tell you, that is true,” he summarizes.



Sam Gil and his team from Sam’s Country Store

Sam recalls the hard work by the state to make sure that people had the basic necessities in the immediate aftermath of the storm. “Because of the storm, there was nothing to drink, you couldn’t get any food,” he says. “The state-owned Belleayre ski resort was

used as a hub for food and clothing distribution. Whatever people needed, they headed out to Belleayre and they had it. The state did an amazing job providing for people’s needs. Breakfast, lunch and dinner were sent down to the Fleischmann’s firehouse. Everyone who needed it was going to be fed. I was so happy that the state did a great job in a situation like that.”

It was the help from government and his community that helped pull Sam and his family through as well. “We had ordered a lot of things for Labor Day weekend,” he explains. “All of our merchandise got destroyed, and it hadn’t even been paid for yet. The money started to come and help us get back on our feet, all of that relief and all the community that got together. We were able to buy equipment and materials and inventory. All of the relief has been helping a lot.”

A year later, Sam can see a great deal of progress. “We completely renovated the dining area from scratch, which is about 90% completed. We did sheet rock, insulation and new floors in other areas as well. I am way ahead of the game in terms of where I expected to be with rebuilding. I thought it was going to be 2-3 years to be back on my feet.”

Sam sees similar recovery for the town he obviously cares deeply about: “If you drive through Main Street in Fleischmanns, you will see houses being repaired. Slowly, all of us are getting back on our feet.”

New York Makes Environmental Improvements

Restoring Damaged Waterways

The unprecedented flood water levels caused by Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee resulted in extensive damage to the state's waterways. Many waterways and surrounding buffer lands were scoured down to bedrock and deprived of their ability to properly absorb future storms, putting public and private infrastructure in further jeopardy. Immediately after the storms, the governor directed the state to work with its federal partners and local communities on a plan to restore the most heavily impacted streams. In July 2012, the state announced \$16 million in NY Works grants and local match support to 26 counties so that restoration work could begin this summer season. The state's commitment leveraged an additional \$44 million in federal and local funding, for a grand total of \$60 million directed toward more than 200 restoration projects across the state. Eligible projects include: stream debris removal; gravel removal in or directly around bridges and culverts; stream bank stabilization and restoration; and culvert replacement. The state's efforts were channeled through two programs:

Flood Mitigation Grant Program – \$9 million

- The Flood Mitigation Grant Program made \$9 million available to counties. The program was created as part of the Hurricane Irene –Tropical Storm Lee Flood Recovery Program in December 2011. DEC and Empire State Development reviewed grant applications from counties. ESD, in consultation with DEC, is administering the program. Grants ranged from a minimum of \$300,000 to a maximum of \$500,000 per county. 23 counties received funding to support 156 flood mitigation projects.
- Applicants were encouraged to leverage other federal and local funding to supplement project costs. The \$9 million in state funds was able to leverage nearly \$13 million in federal funding by using a portion of these state funds as the 25 percent non-federal match to 65 USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Emergency Watershed Protection Program approved projects. These funds were also able to leverage an additional \$3.2 million in local funding, through localities' commitment of staff resources and use of local equipment.



Gilboa Dam

“In the months after the storms, there was an unprecedented cooperative effort between state, federal and local governments to assess stream damage and design projects and proposals that respected the natural functions of streams and related wetlands.”

-The Mountain Eagle (Stamford), July 19, 2012 (Liz Page, reporter)

NRCS Emergency Watershed Protection Program-Local Match Commitment – \$7 million

- Counties were able to secure over \$40 million in federal dollars from USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Emergency Watershed Protection Program for eligible stream restoration projects. However, to receive these dollars, counties had to provide a 25 percent local match—something that most of the financially-strapped counties could not afford.
- Recognizing this, the governor made \$7 million in additional state funding available to meet all the counties' 25 percent local match obligations. The funds were made available out of remaining 2011 special session funds. Assistance is being given for 68 eligible projects to 18 counties that were unable to secure all or part of their match. These state funds will leverage nearly \$28 million in additional federal funding.

Restoring Waterways and Protecting Infrastructure

Little Schoharie Creek Restoration (Schoharie County): Schoharie County's waterways were among the hardest hit by Irene and Lee. The force of the storms scoured five miles of the Little Schoharie Creek down to bedrock, destroying natural curves of the waterway and undermining roads and bridges. In the creek's floodplain, the fourth-generation Van Aller dairy farm on Clauverie Road in Middleburgh was inundated with water. Flood waters destroyed barns, acres of planted corn and many cows. Other nearby farms and homes were similarly impacted. To prevent the same thing from recurring during future, more minor storms, Schoharie County appealed to the state for help in funding the restoration of the creek. The county was able to secure more than \$10 million of federal funding for the project but such funding was con-

tingent on obtaining 25 percent state assistance. Governor Cuomo's commitment of state funds to this critical project allowed it to commence. The project will implement a natural channel design approach to provide a sustainable solution, rather than a temporary band-aid. Efforts will be made to recreate the natural curves of the creek to help control water speed, temper hydraulic forces and promote bank stability. In addition, bank "armoring" will be used to protect erosion-prone sections, and efforts will be made to reconnect the stream to its traditional floodplain, taking more energy out of the stream, especially in high water events.

Ida Lane Stream Restoration (Ulster County): In Ulster County, the Village of Ellenville sustained massive infrastructure damage to water mains, sewage treatment facilities and water delivery systems from Hurricane Irene. Stream bank erosion severely impacted more than a dozen homes on Ida Lane. To prevent similar effects from future storms, the governor awarded \$73,000 in NY Works Flood Mitigation Grant Program Funding to leverage federal funding for a total restoration project of nearly \$300,000. The project will reconstruct several stream channel structures to halt further bank erosion, remove two very large in stream debris piles and result in the return of the stream to its original channel.

Tracy Creek Restoration (Broome County): Floodwaters along the Tracy Creek caused severe damage to the creek and adjacent stream bank, threatening local residences and structures. \$126,700 of NY Works Flood Mitigation Grant Program Funding will leverage an additional \$380,200 to provide for the installation of more than 1,000 feet of rock armoring and the removal of 950 cubic yards of gravel that had piled up during the storms. This project will protect two homes and two private garages from future flood events.

Batavia Kill (Greene County): In the Town of Ashland, \$230,000 of New York Works Flood Mitigation Grant Program Funds will be used to match \$692,000 in federal funding to stabilize and protect the town's well and water system. Extreme high water flows from Irene and Lee caused an the scouring of a new channel along the Batavia Kill, jeopardizing the town's water system. This project will restore the degraded channel to pre-flood characteristics and stabilize the eroded area, using a flood plain bench, armoring and bioengineering.

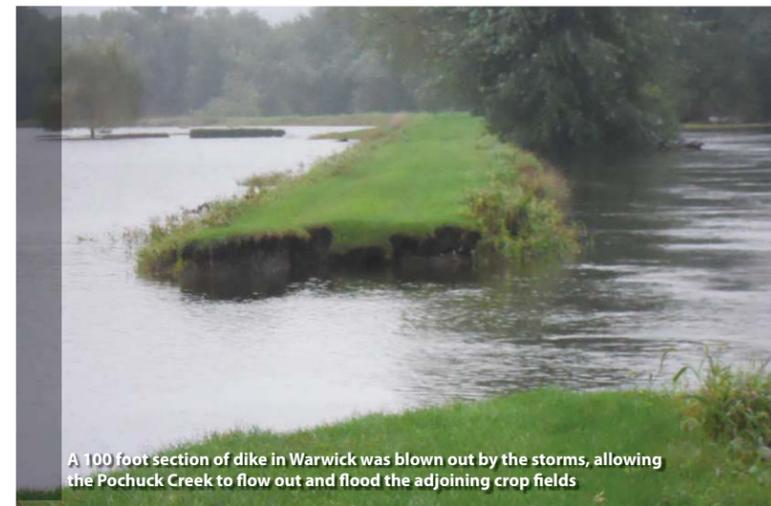
Environmental Conservation Personnel Rescue Stranded New Yorkers

Not only did Department of Environmental Conservation work to restore damage to waterways, its police officers and forest rangers were involved in dozens of acts of heroism in the rescue of New Yorkers during the storms.

Fallsburgh Rescues (Sullivan County): In Sullivan County, DEC's officers assisted Fallsburgh Police with the evacuation of the Alladin Hotel and Bungalow Colony. Flood waters blocked access to the bungalows, trapping tenants inside. DEC officers waded through quickly rising waters to assist the stranded residents. In all, DEC officers cleared three buildings and physically carried 10 children out of the flooded buildings to dry ground. By the time the Woodbourne Fire Department arrived with boats, DEC was able to remove the remaining children and adults from the last of four flooded bungalows. All people stranded were safely removed.

Keene Rescues (Essex County): Flash flooding caused by Hurricane Irene resulted in several Keene households being overtaken by the rapidly rising Ausable River. DEC's Ray Brook Dispatch was contacted by state police advising that 2 adults and 3 dogs were trapped in a residence with waters rising quickly. DEC Rangers attempted to reach the home with a boat but were unable due to very strong river currents. Rangers brought an airboat into Keene after being routed via Elizabethtown by road closures. DEC Rangers reached the home when the airboat suffered a major mechanical failure, forcing rangers to evacuate the family to high ground with the cataraft and another boat. The family was taken safely to a neighbor's home on high ground.

Village of Schoharie Rescues (Schoharie County): DEC Division of Law Enforcement personnel assisted a swift-water rescue team in the Village of Schoharie. Due to the severe weather conditions which initially prevented helicopter deployments, the swift water teams were often the only means of rescue available in dangerously flooded areas. DEC law enforcement personnel were able to guide the teams through washed out areas, lending critical assistance at one of the most tenuous points in the crisis.



A 100 foot section of dike in Warwick was blown out by the storms, allowing the Pochuck Creek to flow out and flood the adjoining crop fields



The 1,200 foot completed dike has widened the floodplain and provided increased retention



Flooding from the Mohawk River in Schenectady

“If the embankment had given way, the Mohawk would probably have cut a path around the dam and the lock. ... [The reinforcement] required 30 more trucks, plus state and local law enforcement assistance to help them wend their way through flood-tangled traffic. The pile of new material grew to almost 130 loads – a blend of sand, gravel and roadbed material. The seepage was pinched off with a tourniquet weighing tons. By the time the job was finished after midnight, the water level was already falling.”

-Times-Union (Albany), September 5, 2011 (Casey Seiler, reporter)

Working with a swiftwater rescue team out of Franklin County, DEC Sgt. Isles led the team through unfamiliar routes around washed-out bridges and damaged roads. Working cooperatively, DEC helped to rescue many residents of the Parsonage Pines senior apartments.

Hurricane Emergency Loan Program (HELP)

At Governor Cuomo’s direction, the New York State Environmental Facilities Corporation created the Hurricane Emergency Loan Program (HELP), providing a total of \$25 million in interest-free loans for the repair of drinking water and wastewater systems damaged by the storms. Twenty municipalities took advantage of this first-ever program, applying for a total of \$18.8 million in loans ranging between \$500,000 and \$1 million each.

The governor initiated a faster approval process in order to get repairs underway quickly in communities that had lost vital drinking water and wastewater systems. HELP loans allowed communities to swiftly restore water lines, pump stations, treatment plants and other critical infrastructure. Communities have up to five years to repay these no-cost loans and can use FEMA recovery funds for repayment.

HELP loans were among the first recovery funds to be received by many storm-damaged communities, including:

Essex County – Towns of Jay and Black Brook: Hurricane Irene destroyed a water line that served 650 homes. With a \$1 million HELP loan, a new water line – encased in concrete and buried six feet below the Ausable River – was constructed in January, according to Town of Jay Supervisor Randall Douglas. “The HELP loan was desperately needed,” Douglas said, noting that town residents had been relying on a fire hose to deliver water to homes and businesses.

Greene County – the Town of Windham:

Following ruptures in the town’s sanitary sewer main and the destruction of emergency generators at two pump stations, the Town of Windham applied for \$882,000 in HELP funds. Restoring vital infrastructure helped Windham prepare to host two major sporting events – The Warrior Run and the 2012 UCI Mountain Bike World Cup. While thousands of spectators came to Windham to witness the international bike riders, more than 25,000 people entered the Warrior Race, bringing a much-needed boost to the local economy. This boost also helped other mountaintop communities near Windham, noted Windham Town Supervisor Stephen Walker.

Washington County – Village of Granville:

The Village of Granville responded quickly when the HELP loans were announced, applying for the maximum \$1 million to restore the village’s wastewater plant and drinking water wellfield that were damaged by Tropical Storm Lee. Commenting on the HELP loan, Granville Public Works Superintendent Dan Williams said, “For the village of Granville, it was fantastic. We honestly were not sure where or how we were going to come up with the money [for repairs]. So this took an awful big load off our shoulders because instead of taking time to come up with the money, we were able to get right to work on fixing the damage. I hope this never happens again, but if it does I hope this option is available again.”

Schenectady County – City of Schenectady: The storms caused extensive damage to Schenectady’s wastewater system, including the North Ferry Street Pump Station, an historic structure built in 1913. Flood waters from the Mohawk River completely inundated the control and electrical systems, as well as the emergency generator, leading Schenectady to apply for a \$1 million HELP loan.

Orange County – Town of New Windsor: The storms caused major damage to the wastewater treatment system, knocking out pumping systems and controls and filling tanks with gravel and other debris. The town’s drinking water system was also damaged when a water line under the Moodna Creek was shut down. With its \$1 million HELP loan, New Windsor is making those repairs along with the installation of a new line for drinking water.

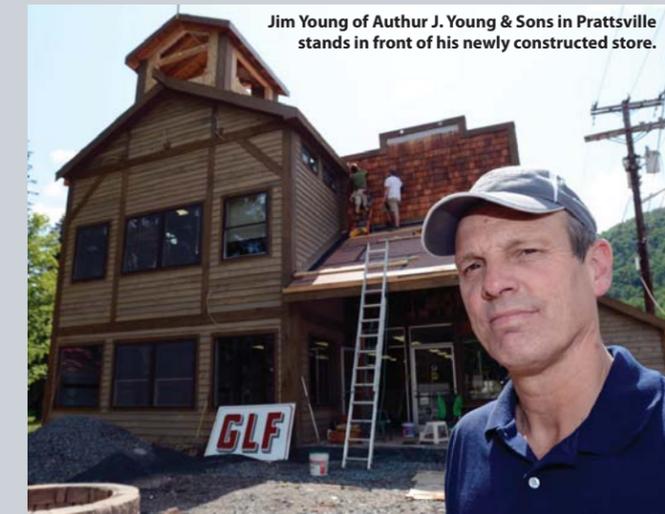
The following constitutes the twenty HELP loans made by Environmental Facilities Corporation (EFC)

- (1) Town of Ashland: \$636,044
- (2) Town of Bethlehem: \$1 million
- (3) City of Binghamton: \$1 million
- (4) Town of Black Brook: \$1 million
- (5) Town of Cornwall: \$1 million
- (6) Village of Ellenville: \$1 million
- (7) Village of Endicott: \$1 million
- (8) Village of Granville: \$1 million
- (9) Town of Jay: \$1 million
- (10) Village of Johnson City: \$1 million
- (11) Town of Lloyd: \$1 million
- (12) Village of Monticello: \$935,000
- (13) Town of New Windsor: \$1 million
- (14) City of Norwich: \$850,321
- (15) Town of Owego: \$1 million
- (16) Village of Owego: \$500,000
- (17) Town of Peru: \$1 million
- (18) City of Schenectady: \$1 million
- (19) Village of Schoharie: \$1 million
- (20) Town of Windham: \$882,000

Total closed amount: \$18,803,365

Voices of Resilience

Jim Young is the owner of Arthur J. Young & Sons, a 54-year old garden center in Prattsville in Greene County that also provides pet feed, hardware and hunting and fishing equipment to the local community. His home is 200 feet behind the store, and his two sons who are part of the business also have homes in the town.



Jim Young of Arthur J. Young & Sons in Prattsville stands in front of his newly constructed store.

state providing not only its own relief but reimbursing the town’s for its contributions to the cleanup. “When the governor comes and very generously says he is going to pick up the town’s share of expenses for the flood,” he says, “I know I can stay here and not be taxed to death in order for the town to come back.”

“After what the state did for the town,” Jim says, “at some point I assume they are going to say that you are on your own. But it was pretty nice that I was able to get help. They made the program simple and uncomplicated. I was very happy with the way it went.”

Jim’s business received a \$20,000 grant from the Empire State Development, the maximum award for which he was eligible. “It helps with the

Jim and his family faced heartbreaking damage from the storms. Even though the Young’s main store building is several hundred feet from the creek, it was inundated with several feet of water and sustained thousands of dollars of lost inventory. “The floods literally lifted the store off of the foundation, repositioned it and ripped a wing off,” Jim describes. Jim, his wife Peggy, their two sons and three dogs even took refuge on the roof of a utility building at one point during the flood.

The damage didn’t stop at the store, however. “My house had five feet of water in the kitchen,” Jim remembers. “My son’s house a quarter mile down the road had four feet of water inside, had the porch ripped off, and had a trench outside that created a 20 foot drop when you stepped out the front door.”

In addition to the financial toll, the storm packed an emotional wallop, too. “There is a psychological destruction that has happened that is very real,” Jim says. “You always hear about tragedy and devastation, but I didn’t think it would come here. I thought I would be the one sending the checks to other people, and now I am the one getting the help. It’s incredibly emotional. It takes so much to get back going psychologically. In many ways, it was the mess even more than the money.”

Jim was impressed that relief came from the state, not just to him, but to the larger community as well. He particularly appreciated the

“I think the state responded very well. I felt good about being in New York.”

-Jim Young
Owner, Arthur J. Young & Sons
Garden Center

façade, the landscape, the signage, the windows, the air conditioning – the things that make for a pleasant shopping experience,” he says. Jim has been very satisfied with the progress his business has been able to make in one short year. After a substantial reconstruction, Young’s has returned to full operations, and has been expanding their store and offerings to meet new needs created by Hurricane Irene and its aftermath. “I’ve really come back incredibly fast,” he says. “I am ordering things for a new extension.”

He credits at least part of that recovery to the quick and effective support from the state. “The money came just like they said it would,” he explains. “I think the state responded very well. It was like the state said, ‘Hey, they need help, what can we do for them?’ They did well keeping the politics out of it. I was happy with the response and the programs they came out with. I felt good about being in New York.”

Lessons Learned: *Actions and Progress*

While the response of state agencies was admirable, as in any situation, we can learn lessons on how better to respond to future disaster situations. As a result of lessons learned during the storm, New York has proposed the following:

Create Five Regional Disaster Logistics Centers

New York Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Services (DHSES) will work with state agencies, the National Guard and localities to put in place five Disaster Logistics Centers in key regional locations across the New York State. When completed, the state will have a total of five regionally located stockpile and staging areas that can be used to store emergency equipment and rescue vehicles, and provide expedited assistance to local governments during emergencies. The Disaster Logistics Centers will ensure that the state has resources and equipment pre-positioned in areas where they would be most needed during an emergency. The centers will be located in the North Country, Western New York, Hudson Valley, Southern Tier and Long Island.

Placing the Right Equipment and Supplies in the Right Place

The Regional Disaster Logistics Centers will ensure that the right vehicles and equipment are in the right place to respond rapidly to an emergency situation. Vehicles including ATVs, snowmobiles, high-clearance DOT trucks and swift water rescue boats will be regionally positioned so they can be deployed immediately. The centers will also have pre-positioned equipment and supplies, including generators, pumps, water filters, specialized rescue equipment, communications equipment and personal care items such as food, water, cots and blankets.

Statewide Emergency Network

To coordinate the emergency response equipment distributed across numerous state agencies, DHSES will create a centralized inventory of all state agency assets that can be used to support local governments during crises. The centralized inventory will also include a new vehicle identification system.

Establish Regional Rapid Response and Incident Management Teams

Regional Rapid Response Teams

DHSES will organize ten new Rapid Response Support Teams (RRSTs) that will align with the new response areas to promptly deploy in emergency situations and coordinate state support with local governments. The RRSTs will be co-led by state commissioners that have been specially trained in emergency management and State Office of Emergency Management regional directors. The teams will also include representatives from the State Office of Emergency Management, State Police, National Guard and other agencies.

Incident Management Teams

DHSES will create five additional regionally-based Incident Management Teams (IMTs) comprised of local public safety and first response personnel who have received specialized training to support localities and provide expertise during emergency situations. New York currently has one state-level and two locally-based IMTs, each of which was instrumental in supporting disaster operations in two heavily flooded counties during the late summer storms of 2011.

First Responder Network and Statewide Credentialing System

DHSES will create a new statewide network of first responders that will give localities access to emergency response personnel when needed. The network will enhance uniform training across regions and agencies, and include an inventory of skills to help match first responder expertise with emergency needs. The process is designed to create the best trained core of first responders in the country, and will include one of the nation's first statewide credentialing systems to ensure that emergency personnel are given rapid access to disaster scenes.

Statewide Conference

Governor Cuomo will host a statewide Emergency Management Summit that will involve emergency management professionals from across the state and feature nationally and globally recognized experts on terrorism, natural disasters and emergency preparedness.

Sale of Unnecessary Equipment

The governor-directed review found an excess of unnecessary and outdated emergency response equipment. Unused equipment will be recalled for assessment or sold, and usable equipment will be centralized at the five DHSES Regional Disaster Logistics Centers.

“Now, with the state picking up the most eligible expenses, costs associated with emergency shelter, road, water system and infrastructure repair, stream and riverbed mitigation and other cleanup projects will be covered. The state is able to cover the local share through funding put in place by the State Legislature and additional federal funds requested by Cuomo.”

-Register-Star (Hudson), April 13, 2012 (W. T. Eckert and Nathan Mayberg, reporters)

IRENE MAY
HAVE
CHANGED
OUR LIVES
BUT SHE
CANT BREAK
OUR SPRIT!

A sign in the town of Schoharie, reflecting the spirit and resolve of residents all across New York State

New York Moves Forward

Clearly, in just one year, the Empire State has made great strides in recovering from Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee. The tenacity of New York's people – buttressed by the support of state, local and federal government, as well as the private and non-profit sectors – has led to rebuilt and reopened homes, farms, roads and businesses. Communities continue on the road to recovery. The long term effects of the storms call for continued vigilance, from assessing what environmental improvements might be needed to prevent floods from future storms to seeing rebuilding efforts through to their completion. The one year anniversary of the storms of 2011 is an occasion both to salute New York's resolve and to recommit to the spirit of community that made the recovery process possible, and fuels it still.

