



**RON DESANTIS**  
GOVERNOR

November 11, 2020

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

Through: Gracia B. Szczech, Regional Administrator  
FEMA Region IV  
Federal Emergency Management Agency  
3003 Chamblee-Tucker Road  
Atlanta, Georgia 30341

RE: Request for Emergency Declaration  
Tropical Storm ETA

Dear Mr. President:

Under the provisions of Section 501 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C §§5121-5207 (the "Stafford Act"), as implemented by 44 C.F.R. §206.35, I request that you declare a pre-landfall emergency for the State of Florida in anticipation of Hurricane Eta. This request is timely under 44 CFR §206.35(a). I submit this request in anticipation of the impacts of Hurricane Eta which as of the most recent National Weather Service forecast includes potential impacts to a majority of the west coast of Florida.

Based upon current forecasts and modeling, I request an Emergency Declaration for Alachua, Citrus, Dixie, Gilchrist, Hernando, Hillsborough, Levy, Manatee, Marion, Pasco, Pinellas, Sarasota and Sumter counties in the State of Florida. I request Public Assistance Category B (emergency protective measures), limited to direct Federal assistance and reimbursement for critical mass care including evacuation and sheltering support that are beyond the capability of State and affected tribal and/or local governments.

At 7:35 AM EST on November 11, 2020, the National Hurricane Center reported that Tropical Storm Eta strengthened to a hurricane and was located 170 miles south-southwest of Tampa, Florida with maximum sustained winds of 75 miles per hour.

Eta is forecasted to strengthen over the next 24 hours as it moves northward in the eastern Gulf of Mexico and toward the west coast of Florida. Eta's wind field is expected to impact a large portion of the western Florida Peninsula and the National Hurricane Center has issued Hurricane Watches for seven Florida counties and Tropical Storm Warnings for seventeen Florida counties.

A Storm Surge Watch is also in effect for eleven counties, an area that stretches over 350 miles of coastline. These areas along the west coast of Florida are the most vulnerable areas to storm surge in the entire state and prone to long duration coastal flooding that could lead to evacuations of coastal populations.

Additionally, Eta will make landfall somewhere on the west coast of Central Florida, areas of Florida on the eastern side of the storm's circulation will experience heavy rainfall in excess of three to six inches of over the next five days. The National Weather Service has issued a Flash Flood Watch for twenty-one Florida counties due to the expectation that excessive rainfall amounts combined with above normal saturated soil conditions will lead to an increased risk of flash flooding and tree damage from any heavy rainfall associated with Hurricane Eta.

The state is preparing to support these counties as they respond to long duration coastal flooding, flash flooding and strong winds as a result of Hurricane Eta.

During the initial impact of the storm in South Florida, a Hurricane Warning was in effect for the Florida Keys, with Tropical Storm Warnings in effect for sixteen Florida counties. Wind damage and power outages to 49,039 customers were reported across Florida, with damage assessments ongoing. Reports of coastal flooding and dune erosion were reported from the Treasure Coast to the Florida Keys due to storm surge from Tropical Storm Eta. The National Weather Service indicated that rainfall amounts in excess of ten inches was observed in portions of South Florida, with flooding damage reported in Broward and Miami-Dade Counties.

The response to Hurricane Eta comes after five consecutive hurricane seasons in which the State has been impacted by multiple million, and in some cases, multiple billion-dollar storms, all while in the midst of the largest disaster event managed by FEMA and the State of Florida, the COVID-19 Pandemic/Public Health Emergency. Every jurisdiction in the State of Florida has responded to and is currently recovering

from at least three federally declared events in the past five years, with most actively recovering from four events. All counties are currently under state and federal declaration of emergency for the COVID-19 event.

In 2016, the State received a Major Disaster Declaration for Hurricane Hermine (DR 4280-FL) and 10 days later was declared for Hurricane Matthew (DR 4283-FL). For these two events State agencies reported \$43.3 million in expenditures. For Hurricane Hermine, FEMA has obligated in eligible costs over \$75 million and over \$492 million for Hurricane Matthew. In the 2017 hurricane season, the State of Florida received a Major Disaster Declaration for Hurricane Irma (DR 4337-FL), followed by Hurricane Nate (EM 3395-FL) shortly thereafter. Hurricane Irma was a category four hurricane that affected the entire State and resulted in the inclusion of all 67 counties in the Disaster Declaration. Following the Hurricane Nate declaration, Florida entered into a Host-State Agreement with FEMA to provide services to Hurricane Maria survivors from Puerto Rico. FEMA has since obligated over \$2.3 billion in eligible costs to jurisdictions to recover from Hurricane Irma; however, hundreds of millions in costs remain unobligated, to include emergency work.

In the historic 2018 hurricane season, the Florida Panhandle and Big Bend Area received a Major Disaster Declaration for Hurricane Michael (DR 4399-FL), a category five hurricane. State agencies expended over \$140.9 million in support of local jurisdictions and individual survivors. The FEMA Joint Field Office estimates that it will obligate over \$3.5 billion for this event, but only \$1.49 billion has been obligated thus far. In 2019, the State was declared for Hurricane Dorian (DR 4468-FL). While costs are still being formulated, the State estimates that the total obligated costs will be over \$181.3 million, with only \$27.7 million being obligated thus far.

For the COVID-19 Pandemic/Public Health Emergency impacts, state agencies are reporting approximately \$1.59 billion in expenditures, which does not include county expenditures. While costs are still being formulated, the State had preliminarily estimated the total obligated costs would be approximately \$1.4 billion. This amount will clearly be exceeded with the Public Health Emergency recently being renewed and the State still being heavily involved in response activities to the event. The overlay of this tropical event to the COVID-19 Pandemic will stress the capabilities of the State to respond fully to the tropical event without the addition of the requested federal assistance.

A Major Disaster, DR 4564-FL, was declared as a result of Hurricane Sally less than two months ago in some of the same counties herein requested. While early in the Recovery phase of this event, it is anticipated that obligations of eligible work will exceed \$184 million. Specifically, in Jefferson and Franklin counties there was significant road and bridge damage, that will likely be exacerbated by Hurricane Eta's impacts in the area.

On November 7, 2020, I issued Executive Order No. 20-277 which directed the State Coordinating Officer to execute the State's Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan in support of the Order in accordance with Section 501 of the Stafford Act. On November 11, 2020, I amended this Executive Order and to include Alachua, Citrus, Dixie, Gilchrist, Hernando, Hillsborough, Levy, Manatee, Marion, Pasco, Pinellas, Sarasota and Sumter counties. At the time of this request, 852,174 Florida residents have been diagnosed with COVID-19, over 50,872 have been hospitalized, and 17,248 have died as a result of the virus. Sheltering operations during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency require that Florida consider additional strategies to ensure that survivors are sheltered in a manner that does not increase the risk of exposure to, or further transmission of, COVID-19.

The unpredictable track of this tropical system has complicated the time frame for emergency protective measures undertaken by these counties. Dixie, Hillsborough, and Manatee counties have issued local states of emergency as a result of Eta, and Levy, Marion, Pinellas, and Sarasota counties have such orders drafted and are contemplating timing of such issuance with county leadership. The erratic nature of this tropical event is complicating evacuation and sheltering efforts and there are other counties discussing such a declaration and planning for the implementation of emergency protective measures, including the use of non-congregate sheltering. While a staple of this hurricane season, the lead time required to successfully execute these operations is complex by the lack of clear track and intensity forecasts from the National Hurricane Center. A regional evacuation process may be used by state and county governments to manage and coordinate a multi-county evacuation.

Medical evacuations and special needs operations are complicated by the additional safety requirements required as a result of COVID-19. Additional federal resources are needed to support such efforts. Emergency Support Function-8 has identified Assisted Living Facilities (ALFs) and Nursing Homes in the forecast cone

who may need evacuation support as well as those in need of alternative power solutions to support their population should they lose electrical power. Alternate operational sites are also being researched and plans developed to address those ALFs and Nursing Homes who in light of the COVID event, have to make nontraditional arrangements for their patients' health and safety.

I have activated the State Emergency Operations Center in response to the threat of Hurricane Eta and the Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM) is coordinating preparation and response measures across the state. FDEM is also preparing to support operations upon request and activation of evacuation and shelter plans by the affected counties. Community Based Testing Sites for COVID-19 in the threatened counties are being deactivated and secured in anticipation of the weather event. Hospitals and ALFs are preparing for the possible loss of power, while at the same time experiencing increased patient census numbers and actively responding to the COVID-19 Pandemic event.

FDEM is gathering resource needs from threatened counties and are planning points of distribution for not only critical resources such as water and food, but also personal protective equipment should the need for sheltering operations be identified. FDEM is also identifying, securing and coordinating non-congregate sheltering (NCS) options for counties who have a need to shelter those vulnerable to the spread of COVID-19. To date, 225 such locations have been secured and stand ready to accept individuals who need to be housed in NCS facilities.

Emergency protective measures required as a result of this event will require extraordinary efforts of state and local government. With thousands of our citizens fighting COVID-19, we anticipate the need for shelters to be greater than usual, which results in increased resource requirements. Even healthy populations sheltered in traditional congregate shelters will require PPE and the implementation of mitigation measures against the spread of COVID-19 in such environments. Special needs shelters and isolation facilities will be used in greater numbers than for previous events due to the prevalence of COVID-19 in the State.

The State Emergency Response Team ("SERT") Chief requested that the following Federal agencies send a representative to the State Emergency Operations Center in support of these general capacities:



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- Health and Human Services (HHS)
  - Mass Care support
  - Shelter support/staffing
  - Meals, water and food resources
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
  - Technical assistance
  - Resource and response support

I have designated Jared Moskowitz, Director of the Florida Division of Emergency Management, as the State Coordinating Officer for this emergency. He is authorized to provide any further information, assurances, requests, or justification on my behalf. I have designated Jared Moskowitz, Kevin Guthrie, and Allison McLeary as Governor's Authorized Representatives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ron DeSantis', with a stylized, cursive script.

Ron DeSantis  
Governor

Enclosures:

Executive Order 20-277, and as amended by 20-278  
FEMA Form 010-0-13

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY  
Federal Emergency Management Agency  
**REQUEST FOR PRESIDENTIAL DISASTER DECLARATION**  
**MAJOR DISASTER OR EMERGENCY**

OMB Control Number 1660-0009  
Expires 09/30/2019

1. Request Date Nov 11, 2020

**Burden Disclosure Notice**

Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 9 hours per response. The burden estimate includes the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and submitting the form. This collection of information is required to obtain a benefit. You are not required to respond to this collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. Send comments regarding the accuracy of the burden estimate and any suggestions for reducing the burden to: Information Collections Management, Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency, 500 C Street SW, Washington, DC 20472, Paperwork Reduction Project (1660-0009). **NOTE: Do not send your completed form to this address.**

Completion of this form including applicable attachments satisfies legal requirements for emergency and major disaster declaration requests under 42 U.S.C. §§ 5170 and 5191, respectively, as implemented at 44 C.F.R. §§ 206.35 and 206.36. Failure to use this form may result in a failure to meet these requirements and/or a delay in processing the request.

2a. Name of State (as defined in Stafford Act 102, 42 U.S.C. § 5122) or Indian tribal government requesting declaration.  Florida	2b. Population (as reported by 2010 Census) or estimated population of Indian tribal government's damaged area(s). <u>18,801,310</u>
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3. Governor's or Tribal Chief Executive's Name Ron DeSantis	4. Designation of State or Tribal Coordinating Officer upon declaration (if available) and phone number Jared Moskowitz, Director FL Division of Emergency Management (850) 815-4100
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5. Designation of Governor's Authorized Representative or Tribal Chief Executive Representative upon declaration (if available) and phone number  
 Kevin Guthrie, Deputy Director, FL Division of Emergency Management (850) 294-8250

6. Declaration Request For: ☐ Major Disaster (Stafford Act Sec. 401) ☒ Emergency (Stafford Act Sec. 501(a))

7. Incident Period: Beginning Date 11/07/2020 End Date \_\_\_\_\_ or ☒ Continuing

*If requesting a "continuing" incident period, enclose an official statement from a qualified Federal Government agency acknowledged as a national authority in a specific incident field (e.g., United States Geological Survey for seismic incidents, the National Weather Service for flooding).*

7b. Type of Incident (Check all that apply)

☐ Drought    ☐ Earthquake    ☐ Explosion    ☐ Fire    ☒ Flood    ☒ Hurricane    ☐ Landslide    ☐ Mudslide  
☐ Severe Storm    ☐ Snowstorm  
☒ (rain, high water, wind-driven, rain, hail, lightning)    ☐ (Must include Enclosure D: Historic and Current Snowfall Data)    ☒ Straight-Line Winds  
☐ Tidal Wave    ☐ Tornado    ☐ Tropical Depression    ☒ Tropical Storm    ☐ Tsunami    ☐ Volcanic Eruption    ☐ Winter Storm  
☐ Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

8. Description of damages (Short description of impacts of disaster on affected area and population). Include additional details in enclosed Governor's or Tribal Chief Executive's cover letter.  
 Eta's wind field is expected to impact a large portion of the western Florida Peninsula, Florida Big Bend and Northeast Florida. As a result, the National Hurricane Center has issued Tropical Storm Watches or Warnings for 24 Florida counties, seven of which are also under a Hurricane Watch. Dangerous and life-threatening storm surge is expected to begin today along the Florida West Coast as Hurricane Eta approaches. A Storm Surge Warning has been issued for 11 counties, an area that stretches 350 miles of coast.

9. Description of the nature and amount of State and local or Indian tribal government resources which have been or will be committed. Include additional details in enclosed Governor's or Tribal Chief Executive's cover letter.  
 The State is working with counties and non-congregate sheltering partners to identify and secure NCS options in the event of evacuations. Resources are being prepositioned and shelter support materials, supplies, commodities and service contracts are being identified and activated. Evacuation and sheltering efforts in response to this tropical system will require regional coordination and longer lead times. A regional evacuation process will be used by state and county governments to manage and coordinate a multi-county evacuation. Medical evacuations and special needs operations are complicated by the additional safety requirements required as a result of COVID-19. Additional federal resources are needed to support such efforts.

10. Joint Preliminary Damage Assessment\*

☐ Individual Assistance      Dates Performed    **Requested** \_\_\_\_\_ **Start** \_\_\_\_\_ **End** \_\_\_\_\_

Individual Assistance Accessibility Problems (Areas that could not be accessed, and why)

☐ Public Assistance      Dates Performed    **Requested** \_\_\_\_\_ **Start** \_\_\_\_\_ **End** \_\_\_\_\_

Public Assistance Accessibility Problems (Areas that could not be accessed, and why)

11. Programs and Areas Requested

Individual Assistance ☐ N/A    ☐ Individuals and Households Program    ☐ Crisis Counseling Program    ☐ Disaster Unemployment Assistance  
☐ All    ☐ Disaster Case Management    ☐ Disaster Legal Services    ☐ Small Business Administration (SBA) Disaster Assistance

For the following jurisdictions, specify programs and areas (counties, parishes, independent cities; for Indian tribal government, list tribe(s) and/or tribal area(s)) If additional space is needed, please enclose additional documentation).

For the following counties: Alachua, Citrus, Dixie, Gilchrist, Hernando, Hillsborough, Levy, Manatee, Marion, Pasco, Pinellas, Sarasota and Sumter

For States, identify Federally-recognized Tribes in the requested counties (if applicable).

Please see **Enclosure A: Supplemental Information for Individual Assistance** for additional information in support of this request\*.

\*Not Required for Emergency Declaration Request



11. Programs and Areas Requested (Continued)	
Public Assistance	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> Debris Removal (Category A) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Emergency Protective Measures (Category B) <input type="checkbox"/> Permanent Work (Categories C-G)* (not available for Emergency Declaration Requests)
For the following jurisdictions, specify programs and areas (counties, parishes, independent cities; for Indian tribal government, list tribe(s) and/or tribal area(s)). If additional space is needed or your request includes different categories of work for different jurisdictions; please enclose additional documentation. The following Counties:	
For States, identify Federally-recognized Tribes included in the requested counties (if applicable).	
Please see <b>Enclosure B: Supplemental Information for Public Assistance</b> for additional information in support of this request*.	
<b>Indemnification for Debris Removal Activity</b>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I do not anticipate the need for debris removal.  <input type="checkbox"/> I anticipate the need for debris removal, which poses an immediate threat to lives, public health and safety. Pursuant to Sections 403 and 407 of the Stafford Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 5170b & 5173, the State or Indian tribal government agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the United States of America for any claims arising from the removal of debris or wreckage for this disaster. The State or Indian tribal government agrees that debris removal from public and private property will not occur until the landowner signs an unconditional authorization for the removal of debris.	
<b>Request for Direct Federal Assistance</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> I do not request direct Federal assistance at this time.  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I request direct Federal assistance for work and services to save lives and protect property, and:	
a. I request the following type(s) of assistance: • Health and Human Services (HHS) • US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) • US Coast Guard (USCG) • FEMA <input type="checkbox"/> Mass Care support <input type="checkbox"/> Shelter support/staffing <input type="checkbox"/> Meals, water and food resources	
b. List of reasons why State and local or Indian tribal government cannot perform, or contract for, required work and services. The scale at which mass care support would be needed for congregate and non-congregate shelters requires the addition of federal resources. The USACE and USCG resources for large scale flooding and search and rescue support.	
c. In accordance with 44 C.F.R. § 206.208, the State or Indian tribal government agrees that it will, with respect to direct Federal assistance: (1) Provide without cost to the United States all lands, easements, and rights-of-ways necessary to accomplish the approved work; (2) Hold and save the United States free from damages due to the requested work, and shall indemnify the Federal Government against any claims arising from such work; (3) Provide reimbursement to FEMA for the non-Federal share of the cost of such work in accordance with the provisions of the FEMA-State or FEMA-Tribe Agreement ; and (4) Assist the performing Federal agency in all support and local jurisdictional matters.	
<b>Request for Snow Assistance</b>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/> I request snow assistance.	
Snow assistance for the following jurisdictions (Specify counties, independent cities or tribes and/or tribal areas).	
Please see <b>Enclosure D: Historic and Current Snowfall Data</b> for additional information in support of this request*.	
*Not Required for Emergency Declaration Request	

11. Programs and Areas Requested (Continued)

Hazard Mitigation\* ☐ Statewide

OR

For the following specific counties, parishes, independent cities or tribes and/or tribal areas.

12. Mitigation Plan Information\*

a. Mitigation Plan Expiration Date 8-24-2023

b. Type of Plan

☒ Enhanced

☐ Standard

13. Other Federal Agency Programs

☒ I do not anticipate requirements from Other Federal Agencies

☐ I do anticipate requirements from Other Federal Agencies

Please see **Enclosure C**: Requirements for Other Federal Agency Programs for additional information in support of this request\*.

14. Findings and Certifications

☒ I certify the following:

a. I have determined that this incident is of such severity and magnitude that effective response is beyond the capabilities of the State and the affected local government or Indian tribal government and that supplementary federal assistance is necessary.

b. In response to this incident, I have taken appropriate action under State or tribal law and have directed the execution of the State or Tribal Emergency Plan on 11/07/2020 in accordance with the Stafford Act.

c. The State and local governments, or Indian tribal government will assume all applicable non-Federal share of costs required by the Stafford Act.

15. List of Enclosures and Supporting Documentation

☒ Cover Letter ☐ Enclosure A (Individual Assistance)\*

☐ Enclosure B (Public Assistance)\*

☐ Enclosure C (Requirements for Other Federal Agency Programs)

☐ Enclosure D (Historic and Current Snowfall Data)

☐ Additional Supporting Documentation \_\_\_\_\_

  
Governor's or Tribal Chief Executive's Signature

11/11/20  
Date

If anyone except the Governor or Tribal Chief Executive signs this document, please provide the documentation that establishes that this individual has the legal authority to act on behalf of the Governor or Tribal Chief Executive.

\*Not Required for Emergency Declaration Request