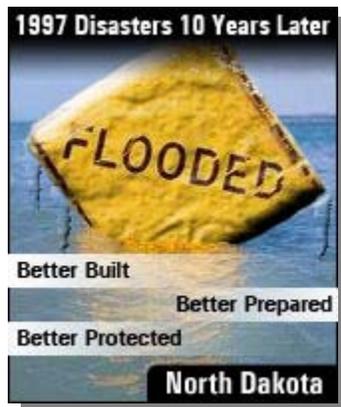


NORTH DAKOTA RESPONSE TO THE 1997 DISASTERS

**Presenting an overview, chronology of events and summary of activity from state agencies
in support of local jurisdictions addressing the 1997 disasters.**



OVERVIEW

The winter of 1996 began as any other; periodic snow storms with moderate to heavy snow fall and chilling temperatures. By 1997, what was once a typical winter had become a year frozen in memory. The impact of the impending snowstorms and spring flooding was felt across the state of North Dakota.

However, a significant amount of focus was being tuned in to the Red River Valley as city, state, and federal officials, alongside the residents and volunteers from across the nation, experienced a flood that has never been witnessed before known as the ‘Flood of the Century.’

Wahpeton, Fargo, Drayton, Pembina – all communities along the Red River that ebbed disaster but were not immune to damage. However, battling a river that defies gravity, nearly all of the city of Grand Forks and its 52,000 citizens succumbed to the power of Mother Nature. The city was evacuated as the river waters, more than 26 feet above flood stage, surged through the cityscape consuming nearly 75 percent of the community’s existence. When the waters withdrew a reticent image emerged of a community that experienced one of the worst disasters that had ever occurred in North Dakota.

Ten years later, a city... a region... a state...a nation... also emerged, dedicated to rebuild after this unprecedented event; better built, better prepared and better protected.

Mitigation Works—

Local and state mitigation efforts, initiated after the 1997 flood and supported by federal dollars, have successfully reduced the amount of personal and public property damages. Through buyouts of homes within the flood plain, greenways were established significantly reducing the impact of future flood occurrences as well as reduced additional damage from floating debris. A permanent river dike was also constructed blending in to the surrounding environment while providing protection, surety and a presence of nature.

Infrastructure and property damages sustained in 1997 cost \$557.5 million. These costs were significantly reduced during a 2006 flood event. Infrastructure and property damage costs incurred during the 2006 flood totaled \$9.6 million. While the 1997 river levels reached record highs, the 2006 flood levels rose to the third highest on record.

Strong Partnerships—

Local, state, federal and private agencies formed a strong partnership which enhanced preparedness, response and recovery from the winter storm and spring flood of 1997. North Dakota is very thankful to the nation for its support during our most catastrophic disasters. The state of North Dakota has a strong, professional, working relationship with FEMA Region VIII.

The State Emergency Operations Plan (SEOP) expanded to include new duties and the addition of 14 agencies. More than 50 state agencies now work in partnership to support local government through the SEOP. This amplified the partnership of state agencies to develop recovery programs supplementing local and federal programs.

A one-stop shop was enacted for transient merchant and contractor licensing that protected Grand Forks consumers. Participating agencies included the Office of Attorney General, Job Service North Dakota, Workers Compensation Bureau (now known as the Workforce Safety and Insurance), N.D. National Guard, Secretary of State’s Office and the Information Technology Department. The Interagency Coordination Team assisted in assessing the needs of response and recovery by filling voids in resource and technical expertise. The N.D. National Guard implementation of an ice dusting program minimized ice jams and stimulated ice melting. The response efforts of the N.D. National Guard to provide water purification, supply and distribution activity served as a significant support the city of Grand Forks.

Leader in Recovery—

North Dakota is now one of only three states to manage its own federal disaster recovery programs.

North Dakota established a crisis counseling plan that now serves as a national model as well as created a Donations Management Plan in partnership with the N.D. League of Cities that also serves as a national model.

N.D. Office of Intergovernmental Assistance (now known as the Division of Community Service) facilitated disaster housing and associated needs through Community Development Block Grants (CDBG). In total, North Dakota received 201.2 million in CDBG funds.

Economic Initiatives—

The N.D. Department of Commerce implemented many programs to initiate recovery including: hiring the Flour Daniel Consulting Firm to provide a basis for planning the state’s economic future, establishment of a Procurement Assistance Center and Small Business Development Center consultants. Job Service North Dakota also implemented initiatives to find employment for displaced workers.

CHRONOLOGY

Late OCTOBER 1996: Early snowfall prompts North Dakota farmers and ranchers to tap into hay and feed supplies six weeks earlier than expected.

NOVEMBER and DECEMBER 1996: Three blizzards strike the state causing limited damages, but temporarily disrupting lives. State and local officials monitor conditions and forecasts. The N.D. State Emergency Operation Plan (SEOP) is implemented to support activities in response to winter emergencies.

JANUARY 1997—

January 11: Governor Ed Schafer issues a disaster declaration for the State of North Dakota as a result of the impending severe winter storms and orders the N.D. National Guard (NDNG) to assist with snow removal efforts. The N.D. Division of Emergency Management (NDDEM), *now known as the N.D. Department of Emergency Services*, issued its first situation report for the Severe Winter Storms.

January 12: President Bill Clinton issues a Presidential Major Disaster Declaration (FEMA-1157-DR-ND) for North Dakota.

Four separate blizzards strike North Dakota causing the interstate and highway system to be closed for extended periods as N.D. Department of Transportation (NDDOT) crews and NDNG work around the clock to open these clogged transportation arteries. Snow removal efforts are periodically suspended due to blizzard conditions.

The Grand Forks and Minot Air Force Bases join snow removal efforts, and Emergency Preparedness Liaison Officers (EPLO) representing the U.S. Navy, U.S. Army and U.S. Air Force report to the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) to support disaster operations.

The National Weather Service (NWS) reports the three previous months are the third coldest three-month period on record for North Dakota.

Heavy snow causes the collapse of several retail buildings across North Dakota. The south side of the North Dakota Winter Show building in Valley City also collapsed causing more than \$1 million in damages.

The severe cold causes a municipal water tank in the city of Elgin to freeze resulting in a leak and equipment failure.

Several people have been treated for carbon monoxide poisoning because snow- and ice-blocked vents in their homes prevented adequate circulation of air. Numerous interstate pile-ups and other traffic accidents occur. Stranded motorists also suffer from exposure and frostbite.

The American Red Cross (ARC) sends a trailer filled with blankets, coats, boots and sweaters as well as 87 cases of donated meat to the food pantry at Standing Rock Sioux Tribe Reservation.

Farmers and ranchers, whose access roads are clogged with snow, struggle to maintain water and seed supplies for livestock. Up to 9,000 animal deaths are reported. The N.D. Game and Fish Department (NDGF) receives 647 reports of deer depredation of livestock feed, costing the agency \$600,000. The Farm Service Agency (FSA) reports the winter storms caused \$5.7 million in damages to buildings and machinery.

A N.D. Department of Agriculture (NDAg) survey indicates that up to 500,000 pounds of milk had been dumped between January 10 through January 19. Grocery stores, particularly those in smaller communities, have extremely low inventories. Snow-blocked roads prevent deliveries.

January 31: During a visit to North Dakota, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Deputy Secretary learns that livestock producers sustained more than \$32.7 million in estimated losses since the winter storms began. The Deputy Secretary announces the development of the Foundation Livestock Relief Program to provide assistance for producers affected by the storm. The USDA also approves implementation of the Emergency Feed Grain Donation Program.



FEBRUARY 1997—

February 2: Two people receive minor injuries when a DC-9 spins around and skids off of a slippery runway after landing at Grand Forks International Airport.

The NDNG records 3,272 personnel days from January 13 to February 4. NDNG and U.S. Air Force crews complete 52 snow removal missions; however, snow removal efforts continue with 21 missions still underway. On February 20, the final NDNG snow removal missions end. Snow removal costs for the NDNG exceed \$1.1 million, not including maintenance costs.

Nine of the 11 N.D. University System colleges and universities report they have exceeded snow removal budgets or recorded unexpected expenses because of the severe winter storm disaster.

Estimates by the NDAg indicate state livestock industry has sustained \$32.8 million in direct losses.

February 18: Members of the State Hazard Mitigation Team meet to discuss measures to mitigate damages from the winter storms and those likely to occur if spring flooding takes place. Participants include N.D. Division of Emergency Management (NDDEM), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), N.D. Aeronautics Commission (NDAero), N.D. Forest Service (NDFS), N.D. National Guard (NDNG), N.D. Parks and Recreation Department (NDPR), N.D. Department of Transportation (NDDOT), N.D. State Radio Communications (NDSR), N.D. Wing Civil Air Patrol (NDCAP), N.D. Department of Health (NDDoH) and N.D. Game and Fish Department (NDGF).

Governor Schafer requests disaster designations designed to provide federal assistance to North Dakota businesses and asks the USDA Secretary for a secretarial Disaster Declaration for physical and production losses. He also asks for a Governor's Certification from the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) for low-interest disaster loans for non-agriculture businesses. SBA issues a Declaration of Economic Injury for 49 North Dakota counties and two SBA representatives set meetings in Bismarck, Jamestown, Fargo, Grand Forks and Wahpeton for North Dakota business owners.

MARCH 1997—

March 6: NDDEM issues its first Situation Report summarizing flood preparedness measures underway by local, state and federal officials. The report outlines efforts to stockpile supplies and prepare equipment and manpower resources for potential floodfight activities. The report also notes the Salvation Army has initiated "Operation – We Care," a toll-free emergency hotline number for volunteers and fund raising.

The District Engineer for the St. Paul District of the USACE conducts a briefing with the Governor, the Adjutant General, State Water Commission (SWC) and NDDEM. On March 24, Governor Schafer signs a Disaster Proclamation declaring a flood disaster exists in Dunn, Grant, Hettinger, Mercer, Morton, Sioux and Stark counties. The Governor also issues an Executive Order allowing for a waiver of dike permit requirements, as long as North Dakotans abide by safety standards when constructing temporary dikes.

NDDEM compiles a list of vendors and construction companies that have dozers and sandbag machines available for use. NDNG constructs a sandbagging machine that will be used to help with floodfight efforts. The machine design includes four spouts capable of filling 1,600 to 2,000 bags per hour.

Flood preparedness efforts continue in eastern North Dakota. Walsh County Highway Department staff and private contractors deliver sand to rural residents. The LaMoure County flood team discusses potential flooding along the James River. NDNG members assist with sandbagging operations in the city of Harwood in Cass County. Extension agents distribute flood fighting information. Pembina County emergency management officials discuss communication response efforts with the Radio Amateur Communications Emergency Services (RACES) coordinator. Volunteers in the city of Cavalier filled nearly 20,000 sandbags.

The city of Grafton Public Works Department begins 24-hour work to clear snow and ice from the city's levees. NDSR provides a radio frequency for dike walkers in Grand Forks County. Volunteers in Red River communities continue sandbagging efforts with Grand Forks volunteers already filling 314,210 sandbags; their goal is 500,000.

March 21: Approximately 200 Hettinger, Mercer, Morton and Sioux County residents are evacuated from their homes as rapid snowmelt causes flooding along the Knife, Cannonball and Heart Rivers and their tributaries. Of those, 175 residents in Beulah are evacuated for 48 hours after the Knife River rose rapidly in eight hours to its evacuation stage. Beulah city and Mercer County officials use front-end loaders and boats to evacuate the few residents who did not leave their homes when warned.

The Cannonball River at Regent, North Dakota rises 12 feet in 24 hours and is expected to crest two feet over its 22-foot flood stage. The river rises 3.5 feet in 24 hours to its 16-foot stage at New England. Ice jams are reported along the Heart and Little Missouri Rivers.

March 25: Floodwaters from the Heart River isolate nine Morton County farm families. Adams County officials report flooding along the Cannonball River destroyed an 80-foot steel truss bridge northeast of Hettinger. By March 26, Cannonball, Heart and Knife Rivers begin to recede as runoff flows toward the Missouri River. Burleigh and Morton County officials monitor an ice-covered Missouri River. The river reaches nearly 12 feet; flood stage in Bismarck is 16 feet. To accommodate the increased river level, the USACE reduces its releases from the Garrison Dam to 4,000 cubic feet per second (cfs), the lowest amount since dam construction.

A Preliminary Damage Assessment (PDA) for individual assistance indicates 211 homes in seven western North Dakota counties were affected by flooding during the March 21-23 weekend. ARC reports expenditures of nearly \$17,000 to help flood victims. The ARC, Salvation Army and community volunteers provide shelter and meals for evacuees and flood fighters.

March 28: NWS issues a Spring Snowmelt Flood Outlook, which still calls for a chance for near-record or above-record flooding in the Red River Basin. The NWS expects Devils Lake to rise to 1,440.5 feet, one-half foot below its record level set in 1830.

March 31: NDNG and NDDOT begin “ice dusting” sites along the Sheyenne and Red rivers in an effort enhance snow melt, reduce the formation of ice jams and improve water flow during the spring melt. The NDNG conducts aerial applications while contractors hired by NDDOT perform ground applications. Health and environmental officials from North Dakota, Canada and Minnesota approved the project after evaluating the environmental impact of ice dusting. The city of Grand Forks provides more than 10,000 sandbags for the effort.

NDNG helicopter crews spray a mixture of water and a dye which has been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) on a three-mile stretch of Beaver Creek in Emmons County. The mixture was used to test its effectiveness in preventing or reducing the occurrence of ice jams.

Flood warnings are issued for Apple Creek in Burleigh County and the James River in LaMoure and Dickey Counties. Ice-plugged culverts and snow-filled ditches force the James River out of its banks and onto secondary roads.

The Maple River overflows its banks near Enderlin, North Dakota in Ransom County. Six inches of water flow over a nine-mile stretch of east- and west-bound lanes of I-94, between the communities of Oriska and Tower City.

The SWC reports Spiritwood Lake in Stutsman County has risen to 1,446.92 feet, natural overflow elevation is 1,446.30 feet. NDGF installs a screen to capture and retain the lake’s fish. Snow and ice prevent the lake from overflowing.

USACE completes advanced flood preparedness measures – construction of emergency levees and a ring dike – in the cities of Harwood and Wahpeton.

APRIL 1997—

April 2: The N.D. Highway Patrol (NDHP) assists NDNG’s ice dusting efforts by rerouting traffic to enable helicopters to land on N.D. Highway 18 for sandbag loading. More than 300 tons of sand has been dumped on to river ice.

Warmer temperatures and brisk winds initiate spring runoff. Westbound I-94 between the cities of Casselton and Fargo is closed. Gauging stations along tributaries of the Red River show rapid rises in 24 hours.

USACE emergency dike construction operations at Enderlin go to 24-hours. Other USACE emergency projects underway include: dike construction for the city of Fort Ransom; levee construction for the city of Harwood; levee construction outside floodways for the city of Wahpeton; dike construction and ditch clearing and snow and ice removal work at the English Coulee Diversion in Grand Forks; construction of a dike in the city of Pembina and realignment work on dikes for the city of Drayton.

April 3: Citing imminent flooding in the Red River Basin, NDDEM requests USACE to provide technical, manual and material assistance under the emergency operations portion of U.S. Public Law 84-99. USACE begins work on a \$600,000 dike to protect the city of Grafton.

The Red River at Wahpeton reaches its 10-foot flood stage. The Red River at Fargo edges on its 17-foot flood stage. Devils Lake rises to 1,438.03 feet, the highest recorded level in 130 years.

April 4: In 24 hours, the Wild Rice River jumps 7.02 feet to 19.10 feet, far exceeding its flood stage of 10 feet. The Red River at Wahpeton rises to 12.96 feet; flood stage is 10 feet. The Red River at Fargo rises 5.8 feet to 21.6 feet, well above its flood stage of 17 feet.

N.D. Highway 81 is closed after water inundates the bridge at Forest River. The city of Minto is threatened. Valley City officials and volunteers fill 13,800 sandbags in two days.

APRIL 1997 (continued)

April 4-5: A blizzard moves into North Dakota late April 4 and early April 5. NWS reports snowfall amounts ranging from 10 to 24 inches throughout the state, adding up to 2.66 inches of moisture to areas already inundated by spring runoff.

The storm creates life-threatening conditions, causes massive power outages and shuts down road systems throughout the state. More than 30,000 North Dakota households are without power. A combination of freezing rain and high winds topples government and commercial radio and television towers, leaving many North Dakotans without access to emergency information. Both flood and winter storm conditions cause the evacuation of hundreds of North Dakotans from their homes.

The Maple River at Mapleton rises to 15.4 becoming the first North Dakota river to exceed its flood-of-record stage. Flood stage is nine feet; flood of record was 15 feet.

The Forest River at Minto isolates about 35 homes and forces the evacuation of six families in Walsh County. ARC opens a shelter at North Dakota State College of Science (NDSCS) in Wahpeton.

USACE levee construction operations in Grafton go to 24-hours. USACE also loans 70 water pumps to eastern North Dakota communities and prepares to send 900,000 sandbags to Grand Forks.

April 6: Governor Schafer requests President Clinton to issue a Presidential Major Disaster Declaration for North Dakota, as a result of severe flooding and the spring ice/snow storm. Major General Keith D. Bjerke, Adjutant General for the NDNG, is designated as the State Coordinating Officer (SCO).

The Red River at Wahpeton crests at an all-time high of 19.2 feet; flood stage is 10 feet.



April 7: Within one day of Governor Schafer's request, President Clinton issues a Major Presidential Disaster Declaration (FEMA-1174-DR-ND) for North Dakota. Lesli Rucker and Pete Bakersky of FEMA's Region VIII office in Denver are named Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO) and Deputy FCO, respectively.

April 8, Thousands of North Dakotans remain without electricity. Ten electric cooperatives report ice and high winds toppled hundreds of transmission towers and 4,300 power poles.

After being closed for up to 48 hours NDDOT and local road crews push through snowdrifts opening all state and interstate systems except N.D. Highway 11 in Wahpeton.



NDNG initiates 27 additional missions in response to the flooding and snow disaster to include: generator deliveries to cities, emergency transportation, dozers to help clear paths for electrical companies, and assistance with floodfight operations.

April 9: Nearly 10,500 rural electric customers still are without power. Utility companies report that power may not be restored to more remote areas of the state for up to seven days because of widespread damages. Utility crews from South Dakota, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska and Wisconsin assist with efforts to restore power. FEMA makes arrangements to bring 50 generators and operators to North Dakota. NDNG provides 18 generators to communities.

April 10: NWS revises its forecast for the Red River at Fargo. The river is expected to rise from 37.5 to 38 feet. Flood of record was 37.5 feet.

State agencies responding to the disaster meet with 120 members of the N. D. Legislative Assembly to discuss the interagency effort required to address problems created by the flood. FEMA institutes a toll-free registration number for North Dakota storm and flood victims to apply for state and federal disaster assistance.

April 11: Vice President Al Gore visits Fargo flood victims and tours other flood-stricken Red River areas.

The Red River reaches its flood-of-record stage of 37.5 feet at Fargo as residents reinforce sandbags and earthen dikes. Breaches are identified along dikes in the Sheyenne River Diversion in West Fargo.

Reports of injuries continue to mount with several North Dakotans being treated for carbon monoxide poisoning and hypothermia.

APRIL 1997 (continued)

As a precautionary measure, the Veterans Administration Hospital in Fargo evacuates one-half of its patients to the Veterans Administration Hospital in St. Paul, Minnesota.

A Disaster Relief Task Force organizes to provide products and equipment for emergency response including generators and sump pumps. Members include Lutheran Social Services, Catholic Family Services, Aid Association of Lutherans, Lutheran Brotherhood, Evangelical Lutheran Church of America and the Missouri Synod of the Lutheran Church.

April 12: Many North Dakotans remain without power preventing operation of sump and water pumps. As a result, basements are flooding. NDNG continues to deliver generators, provide traffic control and evacuate families as part of their floodfight efforts, dubbed "Operation Good Neighbor."

April 14: The SEOC operates around-the-clock. FEMA opens a Disaster Field Office in Bismarck initially staffed by 100 people.

April 15: NWS upgrades its predicted crests for the Red River at Wahpeton, Fargo and Grand Forks. The predicted crest for Wahpeton is upgraded from 18.5 feet to 19.5 feet. The NWS expects the Red River to rise to 50 feet in Grand Forks instead of 49 feet, and to 38 feet in Fargo, approximately one-half foot over original projections.

Sandbag work goes to 24-hour operations in Grand Forks. Approximately 12,000 volunteers filled more than 1.3 million sandbags.

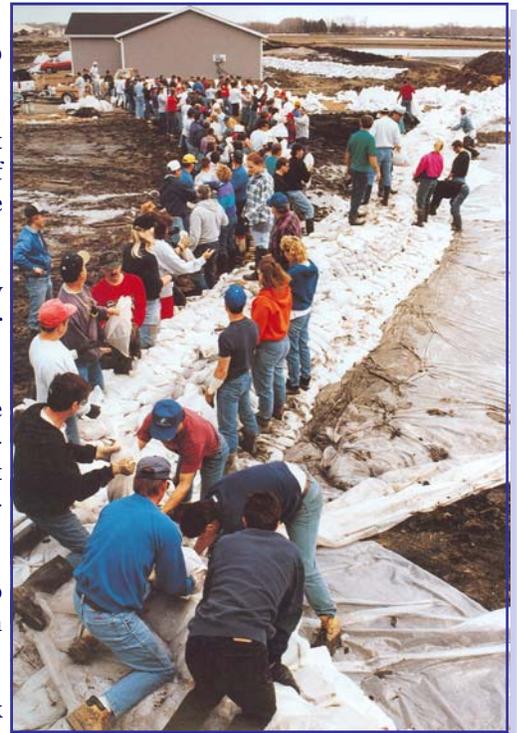
The SEOC and NDAG receive reports of cows suffering from dehydration and weight loss and, as a result, are aborting calves. Power outages prevent operation of electrical pumps used to supply water to livestock. An aerial survey indicates more than 150 head of cattle have drowned in Beaver Creek in Logan County.

April 16: The Governor Schafer announced North Dakotans totally or partially unemployed as a direct result of the disaster may be eligible for disaster unemployment benefits from Job Service North Dakota (JSND).

The Wild Rice River spills out near south Fargo and travels overland toward Rose Creek. NWS forecasts that the Red River at Wahpeton will surpass its 19.2 flood-of-record level set only 10 days prior. The Goose River near Hillsboro rose three feet between April 14 and 15 and is expected to rise another six to seven feet by April 17-19.

Amateur Radio Emergency Services (ARES) provide instantaneous audio and video from all Grand Forks dikes and any trouble spots that arise. The University of North Dakota (UND) closes early so students and staff can join floodfight efforts.

April 17: A sandbag levee in northeast Fargo fails, affecting 23 homes and the Oak Grove School. The Red River at Fargo holds steady at 39.5 feet.



Agriculture officials report approximately 90,000 cattle perished during the blizzard and ice storm compared to 20,000 that died during January and February. With temperatures expected to reach 60 degrees Fahrenheit soon, state and federal officials work to develop strategies for removing the 90,000 carcasses. NDAG, North Dakota State University (NDSU) Extension Service and the FSA open an Agriculture Information Center to assist farmers with problems caused by the winter storm and the spring flood disaster.

Revised flood forecasts cause USACE to raise Grand Forks dikes to 54 feet. Personnel from the U.S. Air Force Base at Grand Forks join Red River floodfight efforts. The Base assigns 500 personnel to that effort. Approximately 540 NDNG members volunteer to assist with the floodfight "Operation Good Neighbor."

April 18: Approximately 1,000 homes in Grand Forks are evacuated in the early morning hours after Red River floodwaters topple private dikes and flow over a public dike in the Riverside Park area. Emergency management officials report that dikes in the Lincoln Drive and Riverside Park areas are becoming unstable. Evacuation of residents living in those areas begins.

The Red River surpasses its 100-year flood event at Grand Forks with record flows of 145,000 cfs. The velocity of water, doubled from April 17 to April 18 through the river channel at Grand Forks, is compounding threats to dikes already experiencing problems with breaches. NWS reports that the Red River at Grand Forks is at 51.55 feet, gaining more than two feet during the past 24 hours. A revised forecast calls for the river to crest at 53 feet later April 19. NDNG pre-positions equipment, such as pumps and helicopters, to allow for a quick response to communities involved in flood fights.

APRIL 1997 (continued)

April 19: In the early morning hours, approximately 10,000 Grand Forks residents leave 3,000 homes as city officials call for a citywide voluntary evacuation and a mandatory evacuation of a 10-block area west of the Red River. Residents of the 118-bed Almonte Living Center are among the evacuees. Earthen and sandbag dikes deteriorate allowing floodwaters through to riverside neighborhoods and downtown areas. The city uses buses to transport flood victims to designated shelters.

The Grand Forks Emergency Operations Center (EOC) relocates to the UND Plant Services Building after floodwaters head toward the EOC.

The only Grand Forks transportation link to Minnesota is lost as officials close the Kennedy Bridge when floodwaters reach 52.9 feet. The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) reports that flows have decreased from 145,000 cfs to 100,000 cfs as water spreads into Grand Forks. NWS expects the Red River at Grand Forks to reach 54 feet.

Three shelters are open at state universities in Mayville, Valley City and Devils Lake. ARC establishes a shelter at the NDNG Armory in Grand Forks and the Grand Forks Air Force Base. Shelters also are opened at Red River High School and Valley Middle School in Grand Forks. ARC mobilizes its national mass care staff. A FEMA truck carrying 1,500 cots and blankets arrives at the Grand Forks Air Force Base shelter.

Grand Forks city and county officials and floodfighters conduct welfare checks on residents to ensure their safe evacuation. With only two weeks left in the semester, UND officials cancel classes for the remaining spring semester.

With the city of Grand Forks' municipal water system in danger of failing, NDNG sends five water purification units to provide bottled water to evacuees. A Guard helicopter crew transports maintenance personnel to the only radio station on air in Grand Forks, KCNN radio, the only radio station still on-the-air, to ensure its continued operation.

Officials for Pembina and Walsh counties review evacuation procedures and prepare to outline those plans with residents. NWS forecasts call for the Red River to rise at least two feet above flood-of-record levels in Pembina and Drayton. Flood-of-record levels are surpassed in Wahpeton where the river reached 19.5 feet, and in Fargo, where the river reached 39.5 feet. The previous records had been 18.5 feet in Wahpeton, and 37.5 feet in Fargo.



APRIL 1997 (continued)

In Devils Lake, a revised NWS forecast calls for the lake to reach 1,442 feet by July, exceeding record level of 1,441 feet set in 1830. NWS revised its forecast because of the additional 2.5 to 3.5 inches of moisture resulting from the April 4-6 blizzard.

SBA opens recovery centers in Fargo and Wahpeton.

A fire rages for more than 24-hours damaging up to 11 buildings in a four-block area of downtown Grand Forks requiring assistance of aerial and ground response units from other cities. Sky crane helicopters with 2,000-gallon dump tanks also are called into action. Flooded streets and lack of water pressure made response to the fire difficult. Northern States Power works shut down power avoiding further risk.

April 20-21: An evacuation order is issued encompassing all areas east of I-29 and all low-lying areas west of I-29, from Grand Forks north to the Walsh County line. Nearly 60 percent of the city has been inundated with floodwaters. Floodwaters are up to roof pitches of homes and damage nearly one-third of the city's river protection system. The city's water system is contaminated and a boil-order is in force. Critically-ill patients from United Hospital are relocated.

The Red River at Grand Forks rises to 54 feet and is expected to remain high for at least one week; flood-of-record was 48.8 feet.

More than 3,000 Grand Forks residents seek shelter at Mayville State University, Grand Forks Air Force Base, UND-Lake Region and NDNG's Camp Gilbert C. Grafton in Devils Lake. The majority of displaced people evacuate to homes of friends and relatives.



Coordinated by the N.D. Department of Human Services (NDDHS), approximately 120 Grand Forks developmentally disabled and severely mentally ill clients are taken to the State Hospital in Jamestown and the Developmental Center in Grafton. The Grand Forks Air Force Base assists with the effort transporting 60 severely mentally ill clients. The North Dakota Long Term Care Association helps secure vehicles for the effort.

Floodfighters conduct massive pumping efforts at the U.S. West telephone company building in Grand Forks keeping critical communications connections and equipment operational. NDHP assists Grand Forks Police Department in neighborhoods patrols. NDCAP pilots transport communications equipment and pumps to Grand Forks and conduct two surveillance flights of the Grand Forks area for SWC and FEMA representatives.

Emergency 911 systems from Grand Forks County, the city of Grand Forks, Grand Forks Air Force Base and UND are transferred to N.D. State Radio Communications (NDSR) in Bismarck, which handles more than 1,000 calls. Motel guests are ordered to evacuate their rooms to allow for sleeping quarters for emergency personnel.

Three NDNG water purification units are activated at midnight to respond to the Grand Forks water crisis. Eight assault bridge boats are dispatched to Grand Forks to assist with evacuation of residents. NDNG forces assist with securing the city. A total of 1,000 NDNG members now assist with floodfight efforts.

NDNG helicopter crews and the U.S. Fifth Army resources help with the evacuation of patients from Altru Hospital (formerly United Hospital).

At the request of the N.D. Health Officer, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) activates three 50-member disaster medical assistance teams to assist flood victims housed at the Grand Forks Air Force Base. The Veterans Administration (VA) is also requested to dispatch its mobile medical van to Grand Forks.

APRIL 1997 (continued)

NDDoH provides information on tetanus vaccinations to state and local governments supporting floodfighting operations.

JSND reports a significant rise in the number of people applying for jobless benefits and federally funded Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA).

FEMA establishes a Disaster Field Office (DFO) annex at the Bismarck Civic Center to assist NDDEM in securing federal assets in response to the disaster.

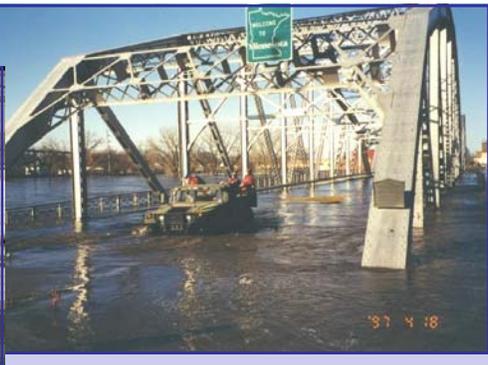
FEMA/N.D. Donations Coordination Center is operational and staffed by Seventh-Day Adventist Disaster Response, United Methodist Council on Relief (UMCOR) and three flood-displaced volunteers from Grand Forks.

To date, the Salvation Army assists 193,161 displaced flood victims and disaster services personnel through "Operation We Care." Staff and volunteers provide meals to 19,000 sandbaggers, emergency/security personnel and evacuees. More than 27,700 volunteers from 14 states participate in Red River flood-relief efforts both in North Dakota and Minnesota.

April 22: President Clinton arrives at Grand Forks Air Force Base to meet with evacuees and state, federal and local leaders. He announces FEMA has been directed to reimburse 100 percent of North Dakota's cost for immediate disaster-related emergency work. The President says he will propose Congress to provide an additional \$88 million in supplemental disaster assistance for North Dakota, South Dakota and Minnesota. During his stay, the President participates in an aerial surveillance of flood-damaged areas along the Red River.



A crack in a levee forces a 3:00 a.m. evacuation for the city of Drayton's nearly 1,100 residents. Law enforcement officials report all residents had left by 6:00 a.m. The town is expected to be inundated by the Red River by 11 a.m. (A reinforced dike ultimately holds the water back.) The river at Drayton rises to 44.82 feet, surpassing its flood-of-record level of 43.8 feet set in 1979. NWS expects the river to crest between 48 and 49 feet by April 23, nearly five feet over projections.



An evacuation order is issued for the more than 640 residents of the city of Pembina. In 24 hours, the Red River at Pembina rises nearly 3.5 feet to 52.1 feet. The NWS expects the river to crest at Pembina at 58 to 59 feet by late April 25.

Area television and radio stations issue an urgent need for assistance spurring several truck drivers and citizens to help the manager of a bulk fertilizer plant in Drayton to relocate his fertilizer supply.

Grand Forks evacuees face the possibility of not returning home for two weeks as the Red River crests at 54.1 feet, nearly six feet above its previous flood-of-record level.

Medical supplies are sent to Grand Forks by NDDoH which also has mobilized public health nurses and staff from the Microbiology and Food and Lodging Divisions.

Representatives for the city of Grand Forks, USACE and SWC meet to establish water distribution and production priorities. The group agrees the first priority is to secure an adequate water supply to Grand Forks Air Force Base, where more than 2,500 evacuees are housed. A second priority is to supply water to shelters in the Grand Forks area, a third priority is to produce one million gallons to start up and sanitize the city's water treatment plant. The city requires seven million gallons a day; the plant's storage capacity is 10 million.

The U.S. Postal Service (USPS) establishes limited service to Grand Forks customers. Plans are to establish a temporary post office at the Grand Forks Air Force Base.

April 23: American Red Cross (ARC) President Elizabeth Dole and North Dakota First Lady Nancy Schafer tour flood-stricken areas in the Red River Valley.

The Red River begins to recede very slowly in Grand Forks, dropping nearly one-half foot in the preceding 24 hours.

APRIL 1997 (continued)

Shelter populations decline as more flood victims return home or seek shelter with friends and relatives. ARC sheltered 1,356 evacuees at six shelters during April 22-23. ARC had sheltered a total of 4,660 flood victims and served 8,200 meals on April 22; bringing the to-date total of meals served to 75,948.

NDDHS initiates an Emergency Food Stamp Program for eight Red River Valley counties. The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) allocates \$1 million to North Dakota to fund temporary jobs in cleanup and recovery efforts.

The N.D. League of Cities (NDLC) assumes responsibility to support local efforts in delivering donated goods to flood victims. Through its network of city officials, NDLC secures warehouse space throughout the Red River Valley and establishes distribution sites and procedures.

A second fire breaks out at a Grand Forks business and is contained.



April 24: A dike breaks in south Pembina affecting four homes and 16 mobile homes. USACE use freeboard to elevate the levee and sandbags to reinforce it.

At Governor Schafer's request, the N.D. Community Foundation establishes the '97 Flood Relief Fund providing grants to non-profit organizations serving the needs of flood victims and for cleanup and rebuilding. The N.D. Farmers Union establishes the Farmers Union Emergency Relief Fund. Offers of help from across the nation pour into the city of Grand Forks and NDDEM offices. Neighboring counties continue to assist flood victims by providing housing and meals. State officials estimate that approximately 70,000 North Dakotans have been uprooted due to evacuation activity or actual flood damage.

Grand Forks officials try to restore city services by establishing a temporary city hall at the UND Housing Office. Employees from NDDoH help with restoration of Grand Forks rural and city water supply systems.

NDSR sends a base station and 18 portable radios to Grand Forks.

April 25: The U.S. Army Reserve's 348th Quartermaster Unit arrives in Grand Forks to assist with production of potable water. The unit provides three reverse osmosis machines. NDNG has 11 such machines in operation.

U.S. House of Representatives Speaker Newt Gingrich visits Grand Forks to tour the area and discuss federal assistance programs with Governor Schafer, local leaders and area business people. NDNG takes Salvation Army leaders on a tour of flooded areas in Grand Forks. To date, more than 20,000 flood victims and emergency workers have received some form of Salvation Army assistance.

Predictions called for the river to crest at 48 to 49 feet on April 23, but water had spread overland which is attenuating the peak. NWS again revises its forecast for Devils Lake. Revised predictions now call for the lake to rise to 1,444 feet by July, 3; one-half feet over original predictions. USGS reports coulees flowing into Devils Lake Basin are at record levels.

Flood waters in southwest Grand Forks begin to recede. Residents are allowed to see their homes for the first time since evacuation. SWC officials report a South Washington Street emergency dike prevented additional inundation of the southwest portion of the city. The dike was constructed in 30 hours and measured three-quarters-of-a-mile long.

Air crews from NDCAP, NDHP and NDGF provide 24-hour security as they fly surveillance over the eastern portion of Grand Forks County. FEMA Broadcasting Recovery Services provide 15-minute flood updates every day on Prairie Public Radio stations throughout North Dakota.

April 26: The Red River at Pembina crests at 54.94 feet; flood stage is 42 feet. Emergency management officials report the Pembina River rages out of control between Walhalla and Neche forcing the evacuation of 20 Leroy residents. NWS downgrades its predicted crest for the Red River at Pembina as floodwaters widen across the northern Red River Valley. While the waters spread out, the river volume decreases, the likelihood of overland flooding increases. Forecasters predict that the volume of water will be the largest to ever pass across the Canadian border.

Preliminary damage estimates report three neighborhoods in Grand Forks experienced total destruction. Restoration of the Grand Forks water treatment plant continues to be a top priority for recovery efforts as city and contractor crews pump floodwaters away from the facility. A contractor replaces flood-damaged motors, while plumbing and electrical contractors help restore the water system. Crews discover that a reservoir contains 800,000 gallons of clean water, which could be used for scrubbing the plant.

APRIL 1997 (continued)



Shelter populations continue to drop with 350 staying overnight at the Grand Forks Air Force Base. ARC reports volunteers and staff have provided a total of 106,957 meals to date.

Lake Region Human Services Center in Devils Lake sets up a flood victims' counseling center at UND-Lake Region to provide mental health, addiction and medication services, as well as psychological support and stress counseling.

April 27- 28: The Red River crest moves into Canada. Floodwaters from the Red and Pembina rivers cause overland flooding in Pembina County during the weekend. The city of Pembina's lagoon is inundated and the agitator at the water plant is not operational. The city of Walhalla loses its water system when a water main breaks.

Dick Armey, Majority Leader of the U.S. House of Representatives, and seven other House members tour Devils Lake and Grand Forks. Construction of an outlet for Devils Lake and disaster assistance for the Red River Valley are under review by Congress.

The N.D. Secretary of State and the Attorney General open a "one-stop shop" for issuing transient merchant and contractor licenses in Grand Forks. Applications are reviewed and processed by representatives of the city of Grand Forks, the Attorney General's Office, Secretary of State's Office, the Adjutant General's Office and the N.D. Workers Compensation Bureau. The Secretary of State reports that more than 200 licenses are issued on April 28 compared to a daily average of four licenses. The Licensing section of the Attorney General's Office issues three merchant licenses per month, but processes 10 times that many applications in two days.

More Grand Forks residents return home to inspect damages. Access to downtown business and adjacent areas is prohibited until city officials complete inspections of the area and remove all hazards. Areas with restricted access include most areas east of South Washington Street, west of Belmont Road and south of Fourth Avenue South.

April 29: NDDoH officials report the city water plant may be operational April 30 or May 1. Problems with water lines that broke may delay restoration of service. A four-member Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) team meets with Grand Forks and United Hospital officials to discuss water restoration.

Gauging points along the Red River, from Wahpeton to Pembina, remain above flood stage. NDSR continues to answer 911 calls from Grand Forks residents. I-29 north of Fargo to Grand Forks reopens. Workers conduct safety and damage inspections of highway bridges inundated by floodwaters.

USACE increases releases from Baldhill Dam to prevent the dam from overtopping. Residents living along the Sheyenne River downstream of the dam are placed on alert. Stutsman County emergency management officials report pool elevation at Jamestown Dam is 1,445.15 feet, which is 0.25 feet higher than the record elevation of 1,444.9 feet set in 1996.

ARC has sheltered 4,974 flood victims and served a total of 132,595 meals to date. In Jamestown, local churches provide evening meals and companionship for evacuees.

April 30: The Red River at Pembina and Drayton continues above record flood levels set in 1979. The Red River at Pembina measured 54.36 feet; flood-of-record was 53.8 feet. In Drayton, the river measured 44.03 feet; flood-of-record was 43.7 feet.

To date, 26,505 North Dakotans have registered for assistance with FEMA's National Tele-registration Center. More than \$3.7 million in FEMA disaster housing assistance checks has been provided to 5,100 flood victims.

Floodwaters recede; utility company workers restore power to Grand Forks residents. Grand Forks officials open the downtown area to the public, but continue to restrict access to some riverside neighborhoods that were heavily damaged by flooding. The Salvation Army opens a supply distribution center in Grand Forks, assisting 1,939 people during its first day of operation.

Most of the water that inundated the Grand Forks Civic Auditorium and Police Department has been pumped out. Groundwater continues to infiltrate the buildings, extending the task longer than expected.

MAY 1997—

May 1: Governor Schafer appoints Dina Butcher, director of the N.D. Office of Intergovernmental Assistance (NDOIA), as state coordinator for disaster housing. The Governor also designates the NDAg and the NDDoH as lead state agencies for coordinating cleanup of flood-damaged fertilizers, pesticides and other agricultural chemicals. The N.D. Housing Finance Agency (NDHFA) grants a forbearance on May payments for flood victims, waiving late charges and not indicating a delinquent status on credit reports.

MAY 1997 (continued)

The Grand Forks city water treatment plant becomes operational as crews work to pressurize the southwest quadrant of the city. NDNG sends a 3,000-gallon water tank and a tractor trailer filled with bottled water to the city of Walhalla, which has had a limited supply of water since a water main broke on April 28.

Twenty shelters had been set up across eastern North Dakota; of those, 16 are still in operation. The Salvation Army coordinates nearly 1,000 volunteers for cleanup efforts in Wahpeton during the May 2-3 weekend. A distribution center in Grand Forks is supplying food, personal hygiene items, cleaning supplies and water daily to nearly 3,000 people. The N.D. Historical Society offers architectural assistance with inspections of flood-damaged historic property in the Grand Forks area.

Residents of the city of Center and of Oliver County adopt the flooded Pembina County communities of Bowsmont and Leroy: "Adopt-a-Town" project sponsors conduct fundraisers including a concert, auction and bake sale.

May 3: Pembina residents are allowed to return to their homes after being evacuated for 12 days.

NDDoH reports Grand Forks water system has been pressurized west of U.S. Highway 81 and south of Demers Avenue; however, because the condition of the city's water mains is unknown, the water is not yet drinkable. To date, 32 of the city's 36 lift stations were operational. Approximately 7,500 Grand Forks customers remain without electrical power and 6,550 without natural gas service.

May 5: Foster County reports 43 roads are washed out and nearly 70 additional roads inundated or with water flowing over them.

ARC operates two "drive-thru" feeding sites in Grand Forks and 32 mobile feeding sites throughout the state. Volunteers serve 39,254 meals on May 4, approximately 10,000 more than the previous day. NDDoH officials report 28 percent of Grand Forks restaurants, bars, grocery stores and gas stations have reopened.

State and federal Community Relations teams begin a door-to-door effort in Grand Forks to ensure that the disaster recovery process is underway for residents.

May 6: Governor Schafer issues an Executive Order suspending statutes and administrative rules dealing with contracting, bidding, licensing and public notices for Pembina, Walsh, Grand Forks, Traill, Cass and Richland Counties. The effort is designed to speed recovery and rebuilding efforts in these counties. The Attorney General's office and the State Bar Association of North Dakota conduct a Consumer Education and Legal Rights Issues Forum for Grand Forks flood victims. Participants also include the N.D. Insurance Department, Legal Assistance of North Dakota and FEMA.

Preliminary Damage Assessments (PDA) of 8,000 North Dakota homes indicates 519 homes, 53 mobile homes and 73 apartments have been destroyed by floodwaters; 701 homes, 69 mobile homes and 175 apartments sustained major damages and 5,959 homes, 166 mobile homes and 497 apartments received minor damages.

NDNG places preliminary costs for "Operation Good Neighbor" at nearly \$1.5 million. To date, more than 1,800 Air and Army Guard members have volunteered for duty since "Operation Good Neighbor" began on March 26. Members have completed 257 missions and have 40 in progress.

NDag reports field crews handled more than 10 million pounds of dead animals, burying 12,000 carcasses and pulling 850 animals from waterways.

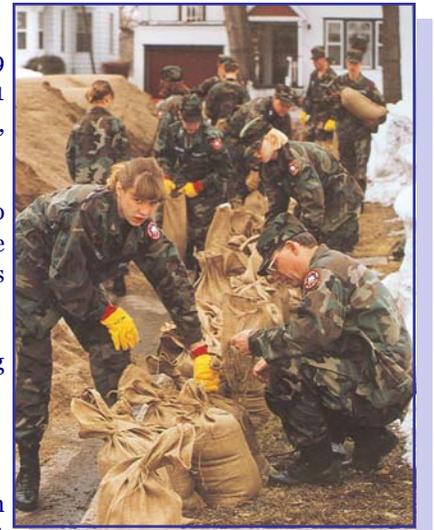
Grand Forks Health Department treats 12 people for possible exposure to Hepatitis A.

In the city of Streeter, North Dakota, part of the sanitary sewer system fails after more than two weeks of overland flooding. Water restrictions are in place for the city of Cogswell lift station which has been inundated by floodwaters.

Devils Lake overtops N.D. Highway 57 as well as N.D. Highways 19 and 20 near Devils Lake. Elevation of Devils Lake at Creel Bay was 1,440.14 feet; the elevation of N.D. Highway 57 is 1,440.5 feet. NDDOT closes the highways until further notice.

May 9: Approximately 3,000 Grand Forks electrical and 9,200 natural gas customers remain without service as inspectors conduct safety inspections of homes and businesses before restoring power. NDSR and Motorola work together to provide a portable MHZ-trunked radio system in Grand Forks.

The National Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters (VOAD) holds a special meeting in Fargo to coordinate member agencies' response to the Upper Midwest floods.



MAY 1997 (continued)

Approximately 7,500 Grand Forks and East Grand Forks households receive \$2,000 from the “Angel Fund,” established after an anonymous California donor donated \$15 million providing direct relief to flood victims.

May 14: The Red River at Wahpeton drops below its 10-foot flood stage.

Governor Schafer and FEMA Director James Lee Witt address 70 participants attending the N.D. Mitigation Recovery meeting. Participants represent state and federal agencies involved in the state’s disaster recovery effort. NDDEM and FEMA hazard mitigation staffs organize applicant briefings and workshops for local officials, which will be held throughout the state from May 20-28. Disaster Recovery Centers are scheduled to open at 11 northeast North Dakota locations during May 19 to June 4.

Devils Lake inflows push the lake level to 1,441.12 feet. Towner County officials report 136 roads sites are either washed out or inundated. The Walsh County Emergency Board estimates 80,000 acres may not be planted this year because of flooding.



SBA estimates 5,200 businesses have been destroyed, damaged or affected by the winter storms and floods. The N.D. Department of Public Instruction reports only one-third of the nearly 9,000 public school students and 1,000 private school students from Grand Forks have re-enrolled in classes.

The Salvation Army, in partnership with Northwest Airlines, plans to send 500 volunteers to Grand Forks to help with cleanup efforts. A Missouri cattlemen’s association, in cooperation with the Salvation Army, plans to hold a barbecue dinner for Grand Forks and East Grand Forks residents.

UND officials make 310 dormitory beds available to flood-displaced people. Currently, 22 mobile homes and 102 travel trailers are at a temporary housing area.

May 21: The Red River in Fargo remains slightly above its 17-foot flood stage and in the cities of Drayton and Pembina the river is about 6 inches above flood stage. Spiritwood Lake water level is 1,446.38 feet, 0.08-feet higher than its natural overflow elevation. Devils Lake continues its steady climb, rising 1,441.43 feet and is forecasted to rise between 1,443.5 feet and 1,444 feet. USACE is modifying plans for elevating the lake level protection system for the city of Devils Lake.

NDDOT opens the final 20-mile stretch of I-29, from Joliette to the Canadian border.



SWC reports the Red River has flooded up to 2,200 square miles in North Dakota and Minnesota, an area approximately twice the size of Rhode Island. The river, approximately 220 miles long in North Dakota, averaged between seven to 10 miles in width at its peak.

May 24: President Clinton releases a federal recovery plan for the Red River states of North Dakota, South Dakota and Minnesota identifying three priorities for federal long-term recovery efforts; mitigation of flood hazards, housing and reestablish community sustainability. The incident period for FEMA-1174-DR-ND, which began on February 28, closes May 24. To be eligible for state and federal assistance programs, local governments or individuals must have sustained damages during that time frame. To date, more than 33,000 North Dakotans report personal property damages, and 297 local governments and private nonprofit organizations providing an essential government service file Notice of Interest applications to participate in the Public Assistance Program.

May 28: To date, contractors in Grand Forks hired by USACE have hauled 34,100 tons of household debris and 92,225 tons of levee material to a landfill completing 75 percent of their first pass through the city.

Mass care workers continue operating four shelters for 281 flood victims. Meanwhile, 425 people are at UND dormitories and nearly 100 people are in travel trailers.

To date, more than 5,755 farmers, farm workers and self-employed persons file Disaster Unemployment Assistance. JSND has paid \$1.24 million in benefits.

May 30: The Red River drops below flood stage at all North Dakota gauging points. Devils Lake continues to rise.

JUNE 1997—

June 3: Governor Schafer meets with members of the N.D. Legislative Council to provide an update on the 1997 flood response and recovery. He reviews four areas: public infrastructure, housing, business and employment.

June 4: JSND receives a \$1.5 million grant for flood recovery jobs from the Disaster Assistance Program. The agency already has received a \$1 million grant.

NDDoH reports up to 30,000 vaccines were administered by Red River Valley public health organizations and Northwood Hospital.

June 6: Dry conditions in the Devils Lake Basin slow the rise of Devils Lake. A revised forecast calls for the lake to rise to 1,443 feet by mid-July, one-half foot less than early predictions. The highest predicted crest remains at 1,444 feet.

The N.D. Psychological Association assists the ARC in providing mental health assistance at shelters and mass care sites. The association is working with NDSU Extension Service providing one-on-one counseling service to disaster-affected farmers.

June 10: Major General Murray Sagsveen is appointed as State Flood Recovery Coordinator.

June 13: Twenty-nine Grand Forks area residents suffer from carbon monoxide poisoning while cleaning their flood-damaged homes with improperly-ventilated gas-powered water pumps or power washers.

The Missouri River at Williston, North Dakota rises above its 20-foot flood stage to 24.07 feet. At this stage, agricultural flooding occurs south and east of Williston. Oil companies temporarily suspend pumping operations.

An Ohio man who had helped with sandbagging efforts in Neche organizes a supply drive for Pembina County, sending a truckload of canned goods, cleaning supplies and a washer and a dryer.

June 15: High winds across Devils Lake wash debris and water onto Woods-Rutten Road causing the road to be closed for the day.

June 16: Plans to voluntarily buy out the city of Bowsmont in northeast North Dakota are finalized. Twenty-two structures, including 14 homes, will be purchased using Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) funds, administered by the state of North Dakota and funded by FEMA. These structures have been subjected to repetitive Red River flooding.

NDDoH announces 2,854 patients were seen by United Hospital emergency staff from May 2 through June 5.

FEMA makes available its Mortgage and Rental Assistance Program to help those persons whose homes were not damaged by flooding, but cannot meet their monthly rent or mortgage because of disaster-related conditions.

More than \$100 million from the SBA, representing 4,378 low interest loans has been approved for businesses and individuals to help cover disaster-related losses.

June 18: President Clinton notifies FEMA Director James Lee Witt that the federal share for total eligible Public Assistance costs to North Dakota will increase from 75 to 90 percent. State and local shares total the remaining 10 percent. Reimbursement for debris removal and emergency protective measures remain at 100 percent.

Dry conditions across the Devils Lake Basin continue to inhibit the lake level. A revised NWS forecast calls for the lake to reach 1,442.5 to 1,443 feet, one-half to one foot lower than predicted on June 4. The Missouri River at Williston crests at 27.5 feet, 7.5 feet above flood stage which causes flooding in the Buford-Trenton Bottoms area impacting hundreds of acres of beets and alfalfa.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) allocates \$50 million in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds for expedited disaster relief to Grand Forks and \$60 million for other flood-affected communities.

FEMA Community Relations workers report they have visited more than 10,000 disaster survivors since April 7.

USACE decreases its releases from Jamestown Dam, from 750 cfs to 450 cfs, as the reservoir elevation drops.

June 24: FEMA Director James Lee Witt announces that more than \$17.6 million in federal HMGP funds have been allocated for the acquisition of homes located in the Red River floodplain. The announcement comes the day after the State Hazard Mitigation Team recommends approval of a \$13.9 million acquisition project in Grand Forks to acquire 289 substantially-damaged homes and a \$5.5 million acquisition project in Fargo to acquire 55 at-risk or substantially-damaged homes.

June 25: Runoff from the Yellowstone and Missouri Rivers causes Lake Sakakawea to rise to its second highest level in 22 years. The reservoir level is at 1,852.9 feet. USACE increases releases from 44,000 cfs to 47,000 cfs.

JUNE 1997 *(continued)*

Ward County officials send more than 1,000 sandbags to Mountrail County for protecting mobile homes threatened by a rising Lake Sakakawea. The water poses a threat to Van Hook Park and mobile homes along the lake.

The N.D. Office of Intergovernmental Assistance (NDOIA) allocates more than \$4.4 million for flood recovery efforts in eastern North Dakota through CDBG funds and HOME funds which are for rehabilitation of existing homes and construction of new homes.

NDDHS reports 181 crisis counselors have provided support to more than 10,000 flood survivors.

June 26: Fence posts and barbed wire donated by Iowa farmers and businesses are distributed to 21 North Dakota counterparts coordinated by the Agriculture Disaster Response Center.

June 27: The city of Kingman, Arizona, adopts the city of Pembina, establishing the “Relief Fund for North Dakota.” Both cities are comparable in population.

The deadline for registering for disaster assistance has been extended a second time to August 6 for North Dakota individuals and business owners.

The N.D. Agriculture Commissioner announces North Dakota livestock producers who suffered losses as a result of severe winter weather and spring flooding may be compensated under the Livestock Indemnity Program. The program makes available \$50 million nationwide.

To date, disaster recovery programs and amounts approved are: \$28.3 million in Public Assistance; \$3 million in Disaster Unemployment Assistance; \$44.1 million in Disaster Housing; \$4.3 million in Individual and Family Grant funds; and \$127.5 million in SBA loans. Additionally, HMGP funds available for North Dakota amount to \$17.6 million.

JULY 1997—

July 2: Devils Lake rises to 1,442.48 feet after a weekend of thunderstorms.

The Salvation Army reports it has distributed 18,053 cleanup kits in the Red River Valley and volunteers have logged more than 83,144 hours for flood-relief efforts.

July 9: Heavy upstream rainfall contributes to high inflows into Garrison Dam, requiring USACE to increase reservoir releases on July 3 from 50,000 cfs to 55,000 cfs and then on July 5 to 57,000 cfs. The releases were again increased on July 9 to 59,000 cfs.

July 10: The N.D. Mental Health Association receives 153 crisis hotline calls in May and 120 calls in June from North Dakota residents troubled by problems created by the winter storm and spring flood.

July 15: Grand Forks city and county officials assume responsibility from state officials for management of undesignated donated goods and services. The city of Grand Forks and Grand Forks County have formed a Donated Goods and Service Board to oversee operations.

July 17: Heavy rainfall during the prior weekend in eastern North Dakota causes the Pembina River to swell nine feet in five days. The river crests at Pembina slightly over its 18-foot flood stage. The additional rains cause Devils Lake to rise to 1,442.84 feet.

Governor Schafer requests Major General Murray Sagsveen, the State’s Flood Recovery Coordinator, to conduct an after-action review of North Dakota’s response and recovery efforts to determine what measures can be taken to minimize the damages in future floods, identify lessons learned and facilitate appropriate changes to the State Emergency Operations Plans (SEOP).

The N.D. State Industrial Commission approves a \$25 million line of credit for the city of Grand Forks to cover costs until FEMA funds and other disaster aid arrives.

July 21: Rick Weiland, FEMA’s newly-appointed director for Region VIII, tours flood-damaged areas and meets with state and local officials in Grand Forks, Devils Lake and Bismarck.

Demolition on flood-damaged structures condemned by the city of Grand Forks begins. It is estimated that approximately 20 structures will be demolished each week. Residents along the Morton and Burleigh County sides of the Missouri River have been rip-rapping or sandbagging their properties.

July 23: Heavy rainfall since mid-June prompts the NWS to issue a revised forecast calling for Devils Lake to crest at 1,443.5 feet by fall to early winter. USACE expects the Missouri River to peak at 14 feet on July 25, the result of continued high outflows from Garrison Dam.

JULY 1997 *(continued)*

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) continues efforts to recover empty chemical barrels from the Red River and to recover heating oil from flood-damaged homes and public property.

July 30: Devils Lake at Creel Bay rises to approximately 1,443 feet, its highest recorded level.

July 31: The State Coordinating Officer (SCO) and Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO) sign a memorandum of understanding referring to eligible damages in the Devils Lake Basin. The memorandum states extreme conditions exist in the Devils Lake area and that FEMA will consider applications for private and public assistance for damages that occur during the February 28 to May 24 incident period.

The State Hazard Mitigation Team recommends approval for the acquisition of 36 flood-damaged properties in Cass County and 10 homes and a business in the city of Wahpeton amounting to \$881,308. The Cass County HMGP project totals \$7 million.

N.D. State Electrical Board inspectors assist the city of Grand Forks with electrical inspections and review of wiring inspection reports. The board expects to complete 3,000 inspections by September. Approximately 11,000 wiring certificates had been issued to electricians working in Grand Forks since the city flooded in mid-April. Last year, the board only issued 849 certificates.

Approximately 134 Grand Forks area residents are moving from the UND dormitory rooms to travel trailers, manufactured homes, their repaired homes or rented homes and apartments.

Thirty couples who belong to the Christian Reformed World Relief are in Grand Forks conducting an extensive outreach/needs assessment study for Valley Interfaith Coalition to Recovery (VICTORY). VICTORY plans to make available grants in the amounts of \$1,000, \$5,000 or \$10,000 depending on the need and other assistance obtained by individuals and families.

Disaster recovery programs and amounts approved to date are: \$58.5 million in Public Assistance; \$4 million in Disaster Unemployment Assistance; \$49.3 million in Disaster Housing; \$8.9 million in Individual and Family Grant funds; and \$155 million in SBA loans. Additionally, HMGP funds available for North Dakota amount to \$23.8 million.

AUGUST 1997—

August 6: The Secretary of HUD announces North Dakota communities will receive \$201.3 million in grants from Development Disaster Recovery Initiative. HUD officials have said the grants include previously announced HUD grants of \$50 million to Grand Forks, \$3.5 million to Fargo, and \$1.5 million to North Dakota for other areas of the state.

August 7: A boil order is issued for the city of Marion, in Barnes County, due to floodwater contamination.

The Agriculture Disaster Response Center closes. The center registered more than 1,850 producers and took thousands of additional phone calls from rural residents seeking assistance. Center personnel coordinated the statewide effort to collect and dispose of more than 11 million pounds of animal carcasses and to distribute thousands of dollars worth of fence posts donated by out-of-state fencing manufacturers and dealers.

SWC, USACE, FEMA's Geographic Information Systems (GIS), and NDDEM compile a hazard mitigation database to include geographic reference points and elevations of structures in the Devils Lake Basin. SWC has compiled levee data for the Red River and will transfer the information to GIS.

August 12: Major General Phillip R. Anderson, Commander Mississippi Valley Division of USACE, meets with local and state officials and tours Devils Lake regarding the continued lake rise problem.

August 13-14: National and regional representatives of FEMA's Infrastructure Program visit the Devils Lake Basin and Grand Forks area accompanied by representatives of NDDEM's Public Assistance Program.

ARC reports it spent \$9 million to date on disaster and recovery work in North Dakota and Minnesota.

August 15: NDDEM and FEMA announce a total of \$27.3 million has been approved to date for the acquisition of up to 400 substantially flood-damaged homes and structures in the Red River Valley. These projects were submitted under the HMGP.

August 29: To date, disaster recovery programs and amounts approved are: \$78.4 million in Public Assistance; \$4.4 million in Disaster Unemployment Assistance; \$51.2 million in Disaster Housing; \$11.5 million in Individual and Family Grant funds; and \$162.4 million in SBA loans. Additionally, HMGP funds available for North Dakota amount to \$23.8 million.

The city of Minnewaukan declares a flood emergency and requests technical assistance from USACE and NDDEM in developing a flood-protection plan for the city.

SEPTEMBER 1997—

September 4: Disaster victims in Grand Forks move from travel trailers to either permanent housing or to manufactured homes. To date, 321 families remained in travel trailers. There are now 248 requests for mobile homes. A total of 306 manufactured homes are sited in the state; of these, 211 of these are currently leased and occupied.



September 5: NDDHS receives a \$3.7 million crisis counseling grant from FEMA. The grant will allow continued efforts to provide crisis counseling assistance to flood survivors.

September 25: To date, disaster recovery programs and amounts approved to date are: \$79.3 million in Public Assistance; \$4.5 million in Disaster Unemployment Assistance; \$52.1 million in Disaster Housing; \$13.1 million in Individual and Family Grant funds; and \$169.9 million in SBA loans. Additionally, HMGP funds available for North Dakota amount to \$23.8 million.

September 30: To date, Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) has provided 643 temporary disaster-related jobs at 43 work sites for people who lost jobs because of the spring disaster. Of those, 346 still employed.

October 1997—

October 9: As winter approaches, NDDHS Crisis Counseling Program reports an increased level of anxiety among flood survivors. Families are experiencing more strife and some children are avoiding school. Families also have expressed concern about potential flooding next spring and their community's level of preparedness for such a possibility.

The N.D. Community Foundation approves \$1.29 million in grants for Red River Valley agencies, organizations and governmental entities that suffered damages during the flood. The Foundation received \$72,675 from proceeds from the Flood Aid Concert headlined by country western singer Travis Tritt.

The residents of Reading, Pa., send 2,500 winter coats to Grand Forks residents. They also donated \$4,500 for hats, gloves, snow pants and other cold-weather gear.

In preparation for winter, manufactured homes provided by FEMA for temporary housing are being winterized. Approximately 142 travel trailers are in use, with plans to discontinue their use by October 15 because the travel trailers are not adequate for winter living. Of the 311 manufactured homes, 242 are occupied. Homes are located throughout the Red River Valley, from the Canadian border to the South Dakota line.

Home repair grants for damages associated with FEMA-1174-DR-ND are 50 percent above national average, according to FEMA Disaster Housing Program officials. To date, 24,447 eligible applicants have received more than \$53 million in minimal repair, transient assistance and rental assistance grants.

Anticipated costs for the Individual and Family Grant Program fall \$10 million below projected estimates of \$25 million, in part of increased Disaster Housing minimal repair grants and SBA loans. The Individual and Family Grant Program has awarded \$13.4 million in grants to flood survivors.

NDDEM is conducting a risk assessment of selected areas across the state to assist local authorities in identifying and implementing mitigation measures for a possible 1998 flood event.

NDNG continues to assist with flood recovery efforts. Guard members are providing a kitchen facility at the National Guard Armory for the Grand Forks Gospel Mission; efforts will continue through November 15. NDNG is also winterizing and storing 500 travel trailers.

October 11: JSND makes the last Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) payments from the week ending October 11, 1997. Grand Forks County had 1,642 registered individuals who were paid \$1,262,339. Nine other counties had more than \$100,000 in DUA payments. In addition, \$3,382,358 was paid in flood-related state unemployment benefits to 7,237 individuals between April 21 and September 30.

October 23: To date, disaster recovery programs and amounts approved are: \$105.9 million in Public Assistance; \$52.8 million in Disaster Housing; \$13.5 million in Individual and Family Grant funds; and \$173.9 million in SBA loans. Additionally, HMGP funds available for North Dakota amount to \$37 million.

October 30: Governor Schafer signs an Executive Order to extend the waiver of state bidding requirements for the city of Grand Forks through November 28. Last spring, the Governor issued an Executive Order relaxing bidding rules on flood-recovery projects.

NOVEMBER 1997—

November 6: USACE meets with emergency management professionals and officials from selected North Dakota communities to discuss preparedness levels for potential 1998 spring flooding.

November 20: To date, disaster recovery programs and amounts approved to date are: \$115.3 million in Public Assistance; \$53.4 million in Disaster Housing; \$13.8 million in Individual and Family Grant funds; and \$177 million in SBA loans. Additionally, HMGP funds available for North Dakota amount to \$37 million.

November 27: In a Thanksgiving letter to North Dakotans, Governor Schafer declares Thanksgiving as a Day of Prayer in North Dakota for all victims of the 1997 disaster. He states flood victims have received support from 50,000 relief agencies volunteers and warehouses full of donated food, clothing and supplies from every state. Relief agencies provided 2 million meals to flood victims.

DECEMBER 1997—

December 5: The N.D. Tax Commissioner and Internal Revenue Service (IRS) grant a second extension to individuals and some businesses in Grand Forks County for filing 1996 income tax returns. The deadline is extended to January 13.

NDDEM completes a Risk Assessment in portions of the state affected most by the spring flood. Two teams made up of planners, floodplain experts and engineers worked with officials of 18 counties to look at what effects flooding had or could have on their jurisdictions. The purpose was to identify long-term and immediate actions that could be implemented to reduce future flood losses and hardships.

To date, disaster recovery programs and amounts approved are: \$151.8 million in Public Assistance; \$53.4 million in Disaster Housing; \$13.8 million in Individual and Family Grant funds; and \$178.1 million in SBA loans. Additionally, HMGP funds available for North Dakota amount to \$37 million.

December 11: Governor Schafer requests a Secretarial Disaster Designation from the USDA for all eligible North Dakota counties. The additional disaster assistance would provide emergency loans and debt restructuring to agricultural producers and agricultural-related businesses. State and local USDA Emergency Boards compiled damage assessment reports to support the request and assist in eligibility determination.

JANUARY 1998—

January 5: The N.D. Office of Intergovernmental Assistance (NDOIA) receives its final allocation of \$3.5 million in CDBG funds for flood-related recovery work. The funds have been designated for infrastructure repair, rental and owner-occupied building rehabilitation and new construction projects. In total, the state of North Dakota, the cities of Grand Forks, Fargo, and Devils Lake and the counties of Ramsey, Richland, Grand Forks, Cass, Pembina, Traill, Walsh and Mercer Counties received a total of \$201.2 million in CDBG funds.

In other flood-related work, NDOIA approved 3,650 furnace rebates totaling \$703,000 for Red River Valley residents whose homes and furnaces were damaged during the 1997 flood. Rebates were for furnaces purchased between March 1 and December 31, 1997.

January 9: Devils Lake waters have frozen at 1,442.6 feet mean sea level (MSL). Since 1993 when flooding at Devils Lake first began, more than \$200 million in state and federal assistance has been provided to deal with impacts and damages to infrastructure, homes and businesses. The loss of land for agriculture production has been among the damage items most difficult to address.

January 12: Governor Schafer announced an initiative to plant 100 miles of living snow fences to reduce snow drifting on roads marking the one-year anniversary of the first Presidential Disaster Declaration issued for the 1997 disasters. The initiative could save the state \$1 million annually in snow removal costs and reduce the number of road closures. The state interstate system was closed 11 times in 1997 because of snow and blizzard conditions.

The Bank of North Dakota (BND), FEMA and the city of Grand Forks sign an agreement that turns over FEMA's manufactured housing program to the state. Cost for administering the program will be covered by FEMA as part of the agreement, and the state will maintain an oversight role. The city has contracted with a local firm to handle day-to-day activities, including maintenance.



JANUARY 1998 *(continued)*

January 13: North Dakota, Minnesota and federal officials meet in Fargo to develop plans for possible ice dusting missions.

NDDoH and the Grand Forks Public Health Department receive more than \$650,000 in flood-related funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. One grant will fund an epidemiological surveillance program of flood-related physical and mental health problems. A second grant will be used by NDDoH to study post-flood changes in health insurance coverage rates and utilization of health care services. A third grant will place three public health nurses in Grand Forks for two years, where they will provide services to public schools serving flood-displaced students, senior citizens and residents of temporary housing units.

Statewide, the total number of National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) policies in North Dakota grew from 3,872 to 12,445 in 1997, a 321 percent increase. Additionally, 277 communities are enrolled in the NFIP compared to 241 the previous year.

A survey of approximately 1,500 Grand Forks residents by the Bureau of Governmental Affairs at the UND indicates only 19.8 percent had purchased flood insurance before the 1997 spring flood disaster. The Bureau also surveyed Grand Forks city residents about their reasons for not purchasing flood insurance. The Bureau stated approximately 76 percent of the respondents did not think the Red River would crest above 49 feet. (The river crested at 54.1 feet.) Seventy percent believed that dikes and other flood control measures would prevent personal property damage, and 58 percent did not think that a flood would ever damage their homes.

January 14: Governor Schafer receives notification that North Dakota has been approved for a Secretarial Disaster Designation from the USDA.

January 20: Local North Dakota governments have acquired 267 homes as part of the fastest acquisition program in FEMA's history. The acquisition project is approximately two-thirds of the way toward its goal of acquiring 391 substantially-damaged properties through local government purchases from voluntary sellers.

January 21: Officials in North Dakota, Minnesota and Canada monitor conditions in the Red River Basin. Data indicates river water flows under ice are above normal for this time of year.

January 22: In his 1998 State of the State Address, Governor Schafer praises the resilience of North Dakotans to rebuild the state after last year's catastrophic flooding. While disaster recovery is ongoing, Governor Schafer stated that the following steps must be taken to prevent similar widespread damages in the future: Purchase of homes in flood-prone areas along the entire Red River Valley to keep people and property out of the most dangerous places. Completion of a risk assessment of the Red River Valley to pinpoint flood-related risks that might cause problems in future floods. "Disaster proof" registers of deeds offices to protect critical property and tax records. Re-examine floodplain regulations to ensure they are adequate.

To date, disaster recovery programs and amounts approved are: \$115.7 million in Public Assistance (insurance deductions account for decrease from previous month); \$53.8 million in Disaster Housing; \$14 million in Individual and Family Grant funds; and \$180.1 million in SBA loans. Additionally, \$37 million in HMGP funds are available for North Dakota.

January 26-29: NDDEM and the USACE are sponsoring several interagency flood preparedness meetings for local officials during the week at various locations along the Red River of the North. The International Joint Commission has issued 40 short-term recommendations to prepare for potential floods in the Red River Basin in the next two years.

FEBRUARY 1998—

February 12: USACE, St. Paul District, presented two options for permanent protective measures to Grand Forks city officials. The first option calls for levee protection and is estimated to cost approximately \$300 million. The second option is a levee-diversion combination with a preliminary price tag of \$932 million. Governor Schafer has pledged that the state will pay half the local cost for construction of a permanent dike system for the city of Grand Forks. City officials are expected to decide whether to undergo the project at a February 26 council meeting.

February 13: NWS issued its Spring Snowmelt Flood Outlook indicating minor snowmelt flooding could occur in the Red River Valley. Minor snowmelt flooding is defined by NWS as a general term indicating "minimal or no property damage, but possibly some public inconvenience."

NWS hydrologists do not expect flooding in the Missouri, James and Souris River Basins. Devils Lake is expected to rise to 1,443.5 or 1,444 feet by May or June. The lake level is currently at 1,442.7 feet.

State, federal and local health officials investigate the potential of an immediate threat to public health and safety resulting from basement heating oil contamination in Grand Forks. Approximately 400 Grand Forks homeowners reported fuel oil spills after last year's flood.

FEBRUARY 1998 *(continued)*

To date, disaster recovery programs and amounts approved to date are: \$117.8 million in Public Assistance; \$54 million in Disaster Housing; \$14 million in Individual and Family Grant funds; and \$181.4 million in SBA loans. Additionally, HMGP funds available for North Dakota amount to \$37 million.

February 19: State and federal disaster recovery officials announce FEMA has approved \$524,039 for a new sewage lagoon for the city of Minnewaukan which has been inundated by Devils Lake flood water.

February 24: FEMA provides more than \$2.2 million in Public Assistance funds for construction upgrades that will protect the Grand Forks water treatment plant. The plant sustained more than \$4.5 million in damages during last spring's flood. Because of these damages, Grand Forks went 13 days without running water and 23 days without drinkable water.

February 25: A blizzard strikes western and north-central North Dakota on February 25 and continues through February 28. Snow depths range from nine to 18 inches. Widespread road closures occur.

February 26: The Grand Forks (ND) and East Grand Forks (MN) city councils select a levees-only protection system to protect their cities against future flooding. USACE will work with state and local officials to develop project details for subsequent federal review.

February 27: Revised, spring flood outlook for the Red River Valley calls for minor to moderate flooding in the Red River Valley. Moderate flooding indicates that evacuation may be required, inundation of secondary roads may occur, and property may have to be relocated to a higher elevation.

The Red River has risen to 20.12 feet at Fargo; flood stage is 17 feet. The Red River at Wahpeton is at 9.1 feet, flood stage is ten feet. The Wild Rice River at Abercrombie is 3.49 feet above its 10-foot flood stage. The Sheyenne River at Cooperstown has risen to 11.73 feet, flood stage is 12 feet.

The revised Spring Snowmelt Flood Outlook reports Devils Lake to rise to 1,444 to 1,444.5 feet, a one-half-foot increase over the February 13 forecast. Devils Lake at Creel Bay reached 1,442.86 feet. A one-foot rise in Devils Lake waters this year could cause up to \$20 million to \$30 million in damages to property and roads, the N.D. State Engineer reported. A one-foot rise should enlarge the lake to around 105,000 acres, an increase of 5,000 acres from last summer.

Applicants who registered for the Individual and Family Grant Program have until April 3 to turn in receipts for disaster-related expenses for preventive measures, moving and storage, medical and transportation costs.

To date, disaster recovery programs and amounts approved are: \$114.8 million in Public Assistance; \$54 million in Disaster Housing; \$14.1 million in Individual and Family Grant funds; and \$181.7 million in SBA loans. Additionally, HMGP funds available for North Dakota amount to \$37 million.

MARCH 1998—

March 13: NWS issues a revised Spring Snowmelt Flood Outlook indicating moderate to major spring flooding could occur along the Pembina River, from the Canadian border to the river's confluence with the Red River. The flood outlook for the Red River at the city of Wahalla calls for a rise to 15 feet; flood stage is 11 feet. The flood of record level is 16.2 feet. The river at the community of Neche is forecasted to rise to 24 feet. Flood-of-record was 24.5 feet in 1997.

Devils Lake is forecasted to peak more than 2.5 feet higher than the 1997 record level of 1,443 feet. The outlook calls for the lake to peak in June or July.

The Red River rises above flood stage at Grand Forks, Drayton and Oslo, Minn., causing limited flooding in low-lying areas. Grand Forks officials placed a crisafulli pump at Belmont Road and 15th Avenue to pump water off the Lincoln Park Golf Course. In Walsh County, Red River rises caused limited flooding in low-lying areas. The river crested at 34.5 feet at nearby Oslo on March 10.

Limited flooding also occurred in Pembina County. Snow-blocked drains caused water to flow over two township roads. Basement seepage was reported throughout the county. The Red River at Drayton rose to 35.8 feet on March 10, and dropped below its 32-foot flood stage on March 16.

March 18, FEMA and Public Assistance personnel for the NDDEM Public Assistance have received 4,376 Damage Survey Reports to date and have obligated funds for 4,133 Damage Survey Reports. Survey work has been completed for 410 of the 440 applicants for the 1997 flood. Nearly \$121.3 million in infrastructure repairs, emergency work and debris removal has been determined to be eligible statewide.

MARCH 1998 (continued)

March 20: The estimated state share of damage recovery costs related to FEMA programs triggered by the Presidential Major Disaster Declaration of April 7, 1997, will total approximately \$18.5 million. Final repair liabilities and costs still are undetermined.

The Federal/State Disaster Field Office in Bismarck and the Satellite Disaster Field Office in Grand Forks established on April 7 to serve as a base of operations for NDDEM, FEMA, SBA and other federal, state and local relief workers closes. A small FEMA program staff will remain in the state until May to continue work with remaining recovery issues.

March 23: NDDEM and FEMA to date have approved the city of Grand Forks' application to begin demolishing 49 flood-damaged homes in the Lincoln Park area. Approximately 700 homes may eventually be part of the acquisition process.

JSND reports 803 people have been placed at 49 job sites as part of its Disaster Assistance Program. The program assists workers who lost their jobs because of a disaster, and assists public agencies and private nonprofit agencies in need of help with recovery efforts. To date, 284 workers still are employed.

The 1997 spring flood Individual and Family Grant Program, administered by NDDEM, has approved nearly \$14.2 million in grants flood losses. The average grant is \$1,341. The staff has closed 23,244 cases.

The State Hazard Mitigation Team has obligated the entire \$37 million available through HMGP for projects designed to reduce or eliminate the risk of future flooding statewide. To date, nearly \$31 million of those available funds have been approved, or are pending FEMA approval.

SBA has approved a total of \$182 million in low-interest loans for businesses and individuals; 11,707 loan applications have been received, of which 6,967 have been approved. Of the total amount of money loaned, 54 percent were to home owners and renters for real estate and personal property losses, and 46 percent were to business owners for repairs to businesses and for lost income.

To date, 24,491 awards have been approved for nearly \$54.2 million in Disaster Housing Assistance provided by FEMA.

N.D. Division of Emergency Management (NDDEM) issues its final Situation Report on the 1997 Spring Flood.



DISASTER STATISTICS

SCOPE: The N.D. State Water Commission (SWC) reported the Red River flooded up to 2,200 square miles in North Dakota and Minnesota, an area approximately twice the size of Rhode Island. The Red River, approximately 220 miles long in North Dakota, averaged between seven to 10 miles in width at its peak.

DEATHS: The winter storms and spring floods have claimed the lives of 17 North Dakotans. Deaths have been attributed to hypothermia, heart attacks and drowning. Carbon monoxide poisoning and frostbite have contributed to several injuries.

Approximately 123,000 head of cattle perished during the winter storms and spring flood/blizzard. Of that amount, 90,000 died during the spring flood/blizzard during the April 4-6 weekend.

EQUIPMENT: Response to the disaster has required more than 1,600 pieces of equipment owned by N.D. National Guard, N.D. Air National Guard, North Dakota's counties, North Dakota contractors, N.D. Department of Transportation, and the U.S. Air Force's Grand Forks and Minot Air Bases.

COUNTIES: Efforts to gain emergency two-way access in North Dakota's 53 counties jumped 10 percent to a statewide average of 88 percent. A county-by-county report showed a 50 percent average for push back of snow. In the northwest quadrant, 12 counties and the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation averaged 96 percent emergency access and nearly 83 percent push back of snow. The 14 counties of the southwest region, including the Standing Rock Indian Reservation, nearly 87 percent access and 75 percent push back of snow. In the northeast, 14 counties and the Spirit Lake and Turtle Mountain Indian Reservations reported an average of 93 percent access and nearly 25 percent push back of snow. The 12 counties in the southeast average 71 percent emergency access and 24 percent push back of snow.

PEOPLE COMMITMENT:

Flood response and recovery required the efforts of 1,886 Air and Army Guard personnel (1,469 Army and 417 Air), representing 22,189 man-days. The N.D. Department of Human Services reports that 181 crisis counselors provided support to more than 10,000 flood survivors. Crisis counseling cost \$3.7 million statewide. This program provides counseling services from the N.D. Department of Mental Health to disaster-impacted individuals.

Throughout North Dakota, citizens welcomed flood-displaced people into their homes, making them feel part of their communities. Cities hosted informational gatherings, potlucks and dinners and community events for flood victims. Schools throughout the state opened their classrooms to Grand Forks area students so that they could continue learning. People across the country responded to the plight of the flood survivors by sending money and donated goods.

COSTS:

A total of 36,494 North Dakotans registered damages with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) National Teleregistration Center. The number is double the combined amount of South Dakota and Minnesota applicants.

More than \$211 million of federal and state aid under the Public Assistance program was provided to governmental entities and qualifying not-for-profit organizations to repair damaged infrastructure. Federal funds covered 90 percent of approved costs for eligible projects. The remaining 10 percent was funded at the state and local level.

N.D. Division of Emergency Management (NDDEM) awarded in excess of \$14.1 million in grants through its Individual and Family Grant Program (IFG) with \$10 million for the city of Grand Forks. More than 30 IFG personnel processed over 23,000 applications. FEMA and State assistance funded on a cost-share basis (75 percent federal and 25 percent state/local) to eligible individuals for serious disaster-related needs not covered by insurance.

FEMA's Disaster Housing Assistance provided Grand Forks County with \$44.8 million for 21,846 applicants. The program provides individual assistance to pay for things such as minimal home repairs, transient assistance and rental assistance grants. Statewide, FEMA's Disaster Housing Assistance totaled \$54.5 million for 29,756 applicants. Home repair grants for damages were 50 percent above the national average according to FEMA Disaster Housing program officials. The average national grant in 1997 was \$2,000 compared to \$3,300 for this disaster.

The Small Business Administration (SBA) loaned over \$180 million to North Dakota businesses and residents, \$20 million over original estimates.

In response to housing needs for flood survivors, FEMA provided \$9.8 million to supply travel trailers and mobile homes for 787 applicants to the Red River Valley. At the peak of the disaster, 266 were occupied.

National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP): \$75 million in claims paid (City of Grand Forks); \$100 million in claims paid statewide. NFIP, managed by FEMA, is a voluntary insurance program that covers losses related to flooding.

DISASTER STATISTICS *(continued)*

The U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) earmarked \$201.3 million in grants for North Dakota from HUD's Development Disaster Recovery Initiative.

Approximately \$13.7 million in federal dollars from the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) has been granted to the city of Grand Forks between 1997 and 2001 to help undertake a myriad of mitigation projects designed to make the city stronger and safer. Mitigation projects have included the acquisition and relocation of properties out of flood zones, protection measures for water treatment plants, installing culverts and other minor flood-control projects.

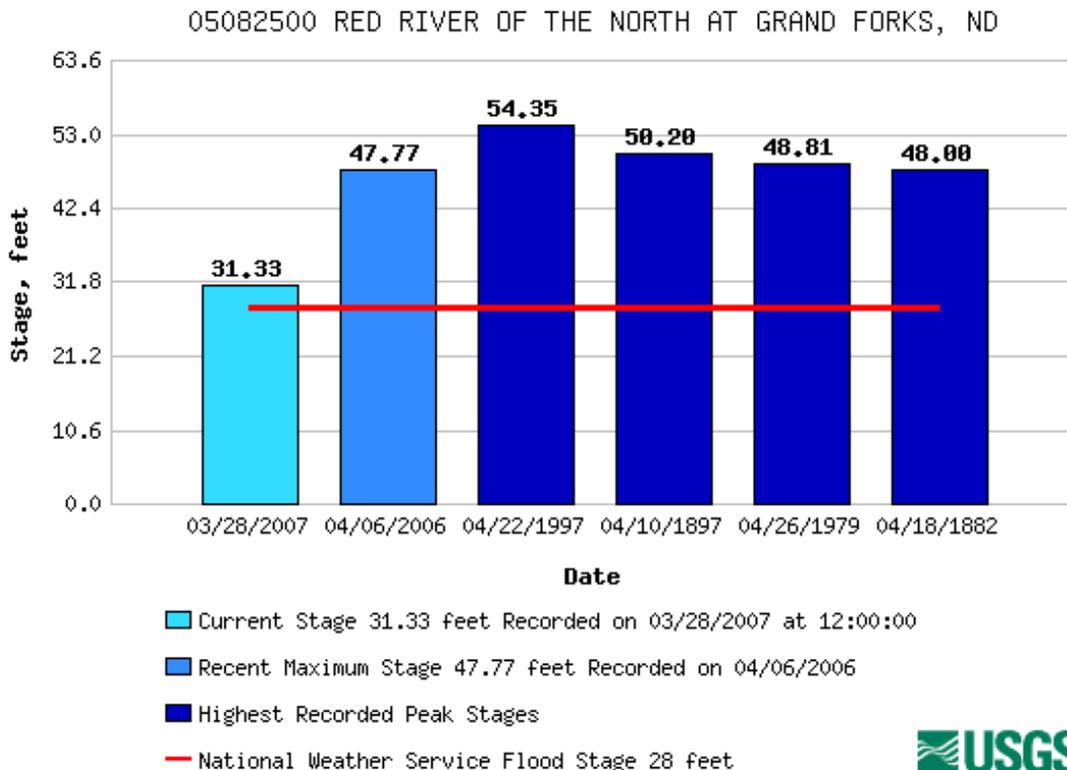
The HMGP allocated nearly \$48 million in funds to provide cost-effective, environmentally-sound and long-term solutions to recurring disaster problems. The HMGP, administered by NDDDES, approved projects to acquire structures in flood prone areas for the cities of Grand Forks, Fargo, Wahpeton, Drayton, Grafton, Bowesmont, Oxbow, Lisbon, Valley City and Mott along with Cass, Ransom, Sargent, Traill, Walsh, Emmons and Ward counties. The HMGP bought out more than 800 structures statewide to include 483 buildings in Grand Forks.

Job Service North Dakota (JSND) processed more than \$5 million in Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) benefits to people who lost jobs or were temporarily unemployed. This program provided unemployment compensation for individuals not otherwise covered by unemployment benefits whose jobs were affected by the disaster. The Disaster Employment Assistance (DAP), a Job Training Partnership Act Title III program, was also implemented. It provided temporary disaster related jobs for people who lost jobs because of the spring disaster. As of September 30, 1997, a total of 647 individuals have worked at 43 work sites; 346 were still employed.

The N.D. Office of Intergovernmental Assistance (OIA) allocated more than \$4.4 million to date for flood recovery efforts in eastern communities.

At Governor Schafer's request, the State Industrial Commission approved a \$25 million line of credit for the city of Grand Forks. The money covered costs to the city until Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) funds and other disaster aid arrived.

Over \$16.7 million in FEMA issued work orders for mission assignments followed the disasters, paying other federal agencies to perform specific tasks associated with disaster response and recovery. Examples include agencies providing mass feeding, medical support and assistance conducting aerial damage assessments.



STATE AGENCY AFTER ACTION REPORTS FOR THE 1997 DISASTERS

N.D. Office of the Attorney General



The Attorney General is the chief legal and law enforcement officer of the State of North Dakota. The Attorney General is responsible for protecting the rights of North Dakota, to defend the actions of state officials, and to ensure public order. In response to the flood in the Red River Valley, the Attorney General's Office initiated rapid actions to protect North Dakota citizens from fraudulent activities that frequently follow natural disasters and assist the local criminal justice agencies and fire service. Divisions of the Attorney General's Office, which directly participated in the flood response and recovery, include the State Fire Marshal, the Licensing Section of the Criminal Regulatory Division, Consumer Protection and Antitrust, the Bureau of Criminal Investigation, the Gaming Division, the State and Local Government and Natural Resources and Indian Affairs Legal Divisions, and the Administration and Finance and Attorney General Administration.

The North Dakota Office of the Attorney General also undertook substantial efforts to establish the "One-Stop Shop" for transient merchant and contractor licensing. The purpose of this program was to streamline the state and city processes for transient merchants and contractors and to provide some protection to Grand Forks citizens from unscrupulous businesses through the use of criminal background checks. In conducting the minimal background checks, more than 20 arrests were made for outstanding warrants. Additionally, approximately 24 illegal aliens were identified and detained.

The establishment of the "One-Stop Shop" for transient merchant and contractor licensing involved the participation of more than eight federal, state and local agencies. Cooperation among agencies that established the Shop was exemplary. Working closely with those agencies, the legal divisions of the Attorney General's Office were able to identify issues which could be addressed through legal agreements and assistance. Having legal staff on hand with a working knowledge of how the operation was progressing also allowed for timely responses and advice.

The Hammer Award was presented by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) on behalf of Vice President Al Gore to the employees of JSND, the N.D. office of Attorney General, N.D. Secretary of State's office, and the N.D. Workers Compensation Bureau. The Hammer Award was instituted by Vice President Gore to recognize teams of federal employees and their partners whose efforts resulted in a government that works better and costs less.

Bank of North Dakota



The Bank of North Dakota (BND) serves as the state's economic development bank and is the only state owned bank in the United States. Its service, in response to the recovery from the 1997 disasters, was focused on disaster relief assistance that could best ensure economic stability. In doing so, the BND established a lines of credit in the amounts of \$15 million line of credit to the N.D. Division of Emergency Management (NDDEM); \$10 million to the Adjutant General of the N.D. National Guard (NDNG); \$25 million to the city of Grand Forks; \$12 million to the University of North Dakota (UND); and \$7 million to raise the dike in Devils Lake. This was the first time in the bank's 78 year history a line of credit was established for a community and school systems. Lines of credit were established to meet cash flow needs pending federal disaster assistance.

The Disaster Relief Loan Program was established to assist the Grand Forks area with \$5 million assisting other areas affected by the spring flooding. These funds were matched by local financial institutions making more than \$70 million pool available. The coordination of the '97 Flood Relief Fund was coordinated with the N.D. Community Foundation with BND serving as the central deposit base. BND staff also provided clerical support for the UND Financial Aid office and also copied loan documents for local bankers whose loan files were destroyed by flood waters. An employee flood donation drive raised funds and material supplies of \$2,826.

The forbearance of student loans was coordinated with the U.S. Department of Education while also working closely with the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) and Veterans Administration (VA) to establish loan forbearance and a federal-state housing assistance application center. BND also reduced the rate for the existing Family Farm and Farm Operating programs allowing low interest loans to restructure debt and repay operating losses caused by the wet conditions.

For each of the loan purposes described above, BND received cheaper funds from the Federal Home Loan Bank to fund these loan programs so that BND could pass on attractive interest rates to the borrowers.

In 2005, BND also responded to homeowners who were affected by sporadic flooding caused by heavy rainfall. BND provided loans up to \$12,000 at 5% fixed for 10 years in a second mortgage position.

Economic Development and Finance



To help the business community recover from the flood, Economic Development and Finance, along with other partners in the "One Stop Capital Center" met with local lenders, developers and primary sector business owners to find out where help was needed and where there were financial gaps. From these meetings, it was determined the needed assistance was in short term working capital. In responding to this need, the Development Fund and Technology Transfer, Inc. boards restructured existing loans and delayed principal/interest payments. The Development Fund also established a \$2 million disaster recovery fund to help businesses recover financially.

Economic Development and Finance hired Flour Daniel Consulting Firm to provide a basis for planning the states economic future. The consultants met with local lenders in Devils Lake and Grand Forks to develop recovery strategies and recommend possible adjustments to existing economic development strategies. Further, Economic Development and Finance committed \$9,000 to match federal funding to help the Procurement Assistance Center work with North Dakota companies to receive federal contracts for work or services and it has paid per diem expenses for Small Business Development Center (SBDC) consultants to come to North Dakota to help local businesses recover from the flood.

Job Service North Dakota



The evacuation of Grand Forks meant the closing of nearly all Grand Forks businesses, which represented 34,013 wage and salary jobs. It was estimated as many as 15,000 workers would file claims for unemployment insurance as a result of the flood. As of August 15, 1997, 12,162 claims were filed; the majority in the first two weeks following the evacuation.

The Grand Forks JSND office was not flooded, and as a result, they were one of the first agencies to be reestablished. Cleanup workers and reconstruction workers were in high demand, and up to 1,800 job openings were listed in the first week after the flood. Nevertheless, there were many people without jobs who applied for unemployment insurance and continued to seek for work. More than 500 people had been employed in various occupations. The Disaster Assistance Program (DAP) has assisted in finding work for many people and it has provided thousands of labor hours towards the cleanup and restoration of the community.

To provide services to the unprecedented number of people coming into Job Service North Dakota (JSND) offices across the state, staff in local offices worked extended hours and weekends. Offices in Grafton and Fargo experienced the greatest number of new claimants, and staff from Grand Forks, Williston, Dickinson, and Jamestown volunteered to work in those offices. Staff from the Department of Labor regional office in Denver, and employees from the Colorado state unemployment insurance division volunteered to work in the central office to help take and process claims.

The JSND office in Grand Forks served as the headquarters for the "One-Stop Shop" licensing center for transient merchants and contractors. The One-Stop Shop facilitated the licensing of reputable contractors, minimized the chance that unscrupulous individuals would take advantage of local residents, assist in the collection of federal and state taxes and assist and educate Grand Forks citizens regarding consumer protection issues and tax laws during the 1997 flood recovery. In addition, a central location, phone number, contact person, and crisis management team were established within the agency to coordinate the need for help with available staff, to facilitate accurate communications, and provide a source for problem solving throughout the agency.

Three consumer hotlines were established; the Commuter Express Hotline was used by members of the workforce to assess the transportation needs of the area, the Work Force Hotline was marketed statewide to individuals seeking work in Grand Forks, and the Contractor Hotline was developed for home/apartment owners to connect with contractors available to provide services. All of the hotlines were housed and staffed by Job Service personnel.

During the 1997 Flood, Cass County put together a disaster Community Response Team for Cass/Clay and Fargo/Moorhead. The Disaster Emergency team consisted of several government agencies and social service providers to assist in the recovery. An Employee Emergency Phone Line was incorporated and have recently started using for information in case of emergency/weather situations.

Recovery from a flood disaster of the magnitude of the one in Grand Forks requires extraordinary efforts. Job Service Rapid Response services provided disaster assistance in the form of over seven million dollars in a National Disaster Assistance Program Grant and the Grand Forks Youth Disaster Marshall Plan. These programs put over 800 displaced workers and youth to work in our community in clean-up and restoration activities in public buildings, parks, and schools. Many youth worked in the emergency child care center, which allowed workers to get back on the job sooner and to begin the process of cleaning and restoring their homes and businesses.

N.D. Aeronautics Commission



During the winter and spring disasters of 1997, the N.D. Aeronautics Commission (NDAero) provided air transportation for state agency personnel. The NDAero was most often required to respond on short notice; therefore, it was necessary for the commission to stay updated on the weather reports and airport conditions. In the future, the NDAero would like to see airports/air transportation utilized more in the overall disaster emergency plan because many times travel by air is the only transportation available.

N.D. Association of Counties



As a stable grass roots form of government, volunteer counties provide numerous services, which establish the framework that help society to function. The disaster conditions of 1997 caused counties to stretch their budgets even further to meet the demands of these extreme conditions. The disasters had the largest impact on three integral county service areas: rural transportation, social services, and public safety. It is in these areas that counties experience the greatest costs and management difficulties in times of disasters. Although federal and state assistance helps cover a certain percentage of the initial cost impacts, counties are responsible to cover remaining costs using their own resources with property taxing authority virtually frozen at current levels.

The N.D. Association of Counties (NDAoC) developed two programs to directly help the counties affected by flooding. The Counties Helping Counties program was a way for counties in need of goods or services to get in contact with other counties who could provide services. The other program, the County Employee Relief Fund, was designed to allow county employees to make tax-deductible monetary donations directly to flood-affected county employees.

Based on survey data from 30 counties, it has been projected that total response costs were approximately \$11 million and recovery costs will be in excess of \$18.7 million. These figures, however, do not include any major facility reconstruction or demolition costs.

N.D. Department of Agriculture



Agriculture, North Dakota's number one industry, has suffered the largest blow of any sector of the state's economy at the hands of Mother Nature during the winter and spring of 1996-97. More than 123,000 head of cattle perished, over five million pounds of milk were destroyed, and close to one million acres of prime farmland were left unplanted as a result of the winter storms and spring flooding that ravaged the State.

Farmers and ranchers not only experienced livestock and crop production losses, but suffered damage to farm buildings, machinery, and stored crops. Direct losses to farmers and ranchers totaled more than \$250 million, with estimated additional indirect losses expected to reach over \$600 million.

The N.D. Department of Agriculture (NDAg) took quick and decisive action to help North Dakota farmers and ranchers during these disastrous and difficult times. As the disaster progressed, the NDAg activated the Agriculture Snow Emergency Task Force and began to take action to coordinate agricultural assistance efforts. Some of the other programs that were utilized include the Animal Carcass Disposal Program, the Help Your Farm Neighbor Relief Fund, the Cattlemen Coping with Winter mailing, the Pesticide Fertilizer and Agricultural Chemical Clean-up, the Oklahoma and Iowa Fence Post and Fencing Materials Donation, the Livestock Indemnity Program Documentation, the North Dakota Agricultural Mediation Service, the Rural Survival Task Force, the Disaster Assistance Web Page, the Adopt-A-Farm Family Program, and the establishment of the Agriculture Disaster Response Center.

Coordinating and establishing these services helped to ensure unified and direction action on the part of agencies and organizations directly responsible for providing assistance to farmers and ranchers. It also helped clarify and communicate the roles of various U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) programs and other federal programs, which provided assistance to farmers and ranchers.

N.D. Department of Banking and Financial Institutions

The impact to North Dakota financial institutions due to the spring blizzard was statewide. Nearly all financial institutions in the city of Grand Forks were either national banks, federal savings and loan associations, or federal credit unions, which the N.D. Department of Banking and Financial Institutions does not supervise. There are three small state-chartered unions, however, located in Grand Forks.

In response to the flood, the N.D. Banking and Financial Institutions generated and continued to maintain a listing showing the status for returning financial services to customers due to financial institutions' main offices and facilities being disrupted by the flooding or evacuation orders. This information was sent to all financial institutions in the Ninth Federal Reserve District, the American Red Cross, and was to be available to others making inquiry. The listing also includes telephone numbers or special "hotlines" that have been established for customer use.

N.D. Banking and Financial Institutions *(continued)*

The NDBFI examiners were instructed to encourage lenders to work with borrowers by deferring loan payments and crafting loan terms and agreements to accommodate borrowers' situations. Further, examiners were asked to use leniency in assessing loan collateral margins for borrowers impacted by the flood.

N.D. Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

When the National Weather Service (NWS) declared that the Red River would crest in Grand Forks at 49 feet, many volunteers helped sandbag, in order to make the existing dikes high enough to handle the predicted crest. By March, the Grand Forks Community Service/Restitution Program (GFCSR), the Wahpeton District Parole/Probation Office, and the RESTORE program in Fargo, began referring court-ordered community service clients and parole/probation offenders to help in the sandbagging efforts. In total, 55 persons completed approximately 4,443 hours of community service toward the sandbagging and flood fighting effort.

After the city of Grand Forks was evacuated, 51 inmates at the Grand Forks Correctional Center were relocated to other correctional facilities. At the State Penitentiary, off duty staff assisted with processing and setting up housing for some of the displaced inmates. Inmates were temporarily housed in the infirmary, orientation unit, women's unit, and a unit in the women's gymnasium. Cots were borrowed from the NDNG and mattresses were brought up from the Missouri River Correctional Center. Other jails in the area agreed to accept 21 of the inmates and additional inmates were released by court order on April 24 and 25.

In an effort to make contact with parole and probation clients, the Grand Forks adult parole/probation office re-routed all calls to the Grand Forks Office to the Bismarck Central Office. In addition, a temporary office was sent up in Larimore, North Dakota, and was placed in the Grand Forks Herald, requesting all parole/probation offenders assigned to the Grand Forks Office to contact the Larimore Office, local radio stations announced that all parole/probation offenders were to contact the Larimore Office, officers performed home checks for criminal offenders, and officers used answering machines in their residences for offender check ins. By July 1, 1997, nearly all of the criminal offenders assigned to the Grand Forks adult parole and probation office were accounted for. Bench warrants have been issued for those offenders who are still unaccounted for.

N.D. Department of Health



The N.D. Department of Health (NDDoH) plays an integral role in protecting the health of North Dakotans. When flooding began in Grand Forks, NDDoH staff members responded to immediate public health needs such as maintaining sanitary living conditions, relocating nursing home residents who were forced out of their homes during the emergency evacuation, and restoring the city's drinking water system. The State Health Officer assisted the medical community with evacuation of the medical part complex, provided on-site support to community and public health officials and worked with community, state, and federal agencies to coordinate emergency and primary health care services.

Many divisions of the NDDoH were active in preparation, response and recovery efforts before the flooding occurred. In early spring, the Division of Microbiology requested funding to purchase larvicide in anticipation of increased mosquito counts due to flooding. Employees in the health department's Division of Disease Control worked with local public health departments to encourage tetanus immunizations among potential flood victims. The Preventative Health Section declared that dead cattle in waterways constituted a public health threat, and FEMA funding was made available for cattle removal. Thereafter, the Division of Water Quality assisted in the removal and farm-site burial of 954 cattle that had frozen to death in the state's streams, rivers, and lakes. This division also assisted in the burial of an additional 13,768 cattle to avoid potential health hazards.

After the flooding, NDDoH staff members worked with FEMA and the Grand Forks Public Health Department to prepare 25,000 cleanup kits that would supplement supplies donated through the American Red Cross and the Salvation Army. In addition, nearly every division of the department was instrumental in flood recovery efforts. For instance, the Division of Waste Management worked with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to develop a plan for debris removal in Grand Forks and assisted the EPA in establishing a household hazardous waste collection and disposal program. The Division of Environmental Engineering was active in coordinating with Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to advise contractors about proper respiratory precautions during clean-up activities, providing oversight inspections of contractors to ensure worker safety, and inspecting asbestos removal work sites to ensure worker safety and compliance with asbestos regulations.

N.D. Department of Human Services



The State Emergency Operations Plan (SEOP) assigns functional coordination of individual and family assistance to the N.D. Department of Human Services (NDDHS). The purpose is to provide emergency or disaster victims with services necessary to meet basic and special human needs.

N.D. Department of Human Services (continued)

NDDHS is an umbrella agency that provides human services in the areas of aging, mental health, addiction, child protection, public assistance, Medicaid, child support enforcement and energy assistance. The Department administers its programs through eight regional human service centers, the Developmental Center, a residential facility for persons with developmental disabilities and the N.D. State Hospital. Economic Assistance programs are state supervised and county administered.

During the response phase of the flood, the NDDHS coordinated with the American Red Cross, the N.D. Department of Health NDDoH, and the N.D. Long-Term Care Association to relocate vulnerable children and adults who had been receiving care from nursing homes, basic care facilities, and home and community based programs. Additionally, the NDDHS applied for and received a federal waiver which simplified the process for Medicaid recipients to access medical services. Further, the NDDHS provided technical infrastructure and technical assistance to the Grand Forks County Social Services office so it could offer displaced Grand Forks county residents Food Stamps, Aid to Families with Dependent Children, Medicaid and other necessities.

Information from other states that have had similar disasters indicates North Dakota should expect increased caseloads related to child and elder abuse and neglect, alcohol, and drug abuse, mental health issues, and increasing severity of mental illness. Therefore, the NDDHS has funded a staff of 192 to provide crisis counseling, provided funding to locate vulnerable elderly, earmarked an additional \$200,000 for the rebuilding of the Child Care System in Grand Forks, and acts as a focal point for state-wide information and referral for special need social service issues.

N.D. Department of Public Instruction

After Grand Forks was evacuated, the N.D. Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) immediately requested that all North Dakota school districts accept flood displaced children as resident students for the balance of the 96-97 school term and assured school districts that they would receive foundation aid for flood displaced students enrolled at their schools. The Department also made an agreement with education officials in Minnesota and South Dakota to admit flood displaced students to their schools regardless of their state of residence.

NDDPI's food distribution office worked to arrange delivery and allocation of commodity foods that were donated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). This food was distributed to the American Red Cross and Salvation Army, which together provided more than 1.3 million meals during the duration of the flooding disaster.

The Department received a waiver from the USDA on the application process for children applying for free meal benefits. As a result, all flood-displaced children were allowed to receive free breakfasts and lunches at host schools for the duration of the 1996-1997 school year without the need to submit an application. This resulted in about 2,600 children receiving 2,621 free breakfasts and 40,567 free lunches in April and May of 1997.

N.D. Department of Transportation

 During the winter of 1997, the N.D. Department of Transportation (NDDOT) counted nine major storms that closed down the Interstate highway system. This count included a total of 12 separate closings on either I-29 or I-94. As a result of the heavy snowfalls, the NDDOT had all 18 of its snow blowers and 13 seven ton V-plows working in the eastern half of the state, and 320 snow plows were used across the state. Nevertheless, because of the significant amount of snow, the NDDOT received additional assistance with snow removal. NDDOT borrowed two snow blowers from the Montana DOT, seven U.S. Air Force snow blowers, two N.D. Air National Guard snow blowers, 30 NDNG dozers, and hired contractors. In total, approximately 1,600 pieces of equipment and 450 employees were used for snow removal during the peak of the disaster.

In January alone, the NDDOT spent \$2,746,866 on snow removal. After the three-day blizzard in April, \$259,587 was spent on snow removal. The total for the entire winter was \$5,738,335. During a normal year, snow removal expenses are about \$2.2 million. Eligible costs for the disaster was \$3,741,150 with a total reimbursement from FEMA of \$2,805,863.

Since the winter of 1996/1997 the NDDOT has developed a Living Snow Fence program to help mitigate where snow accumulates on North Dakota's highways. The snow fences are also an effort to keep highways from becoming blocked and to provide safe roads for the traveling public. NDDOT strategically placed 20 dynamic electric message signs along I-94 and I-29 to provide advanced warning to motorists for winter time road closures and emergency travel information.

The NDDOT has since purchased a mobile generator, located in the Fargo District. This generator is able to be moved to other locations and can provide back up power in case of a power outage. A Low Ground Pressure dozer was also purchased and is very effective in moving large piles of snow. NDDOT has contracting with a private weather forecasting company that uses state of the art weather forecasting technology. This enables NDDOT to better prepare for extreme weather conditions.

N.D. Department of Transportation *(continued)*

Due to new technology since 1996/1997 the NDDOT has significantly increased its road reporting. Five daily road reports have been replaced with eight or more daily reports. The frequency of updated reports can change with the changes in weather conditions. The information is available on the NDDOT Web site and is also fed to the 511 system.

In February of 2003, the NDDOT implemented the 511 Travel Information System. This system gives travelers immediate weather and road information via telephone or through any Internet connection to any segment of state owned roads in North Dakota.

N.D. Forest Service



North Dakota experienced excessive spring flooding in 1997. Trees were inundated with water for prolonged periods of time, damaged by large ice flows, or destroyed during emergency dike building operations. Native forest areas were also negatively affected by the seasonal flooding. Devils Lake reached a record level of 1,442.22 feet above sea level on June 18, 1997, which flooded an additional 200,000 trees. Since 1993, the lake has inundated more than 900,000 trees.

In the Red River Valley, it is estimated that 5,000 community trees, valued at over \$525,000, were damaged or destroyed. Most of the trees destroyed during the flood were less than three inches in diameter and planted within the last five years in parks, subdivisions, and city nurseries along river corridors. The heaviest losses were from mechanical damage caused by large sheets of ice or flood debris shearing off young trees and from emergency dike building efforts within and adjacent to the planted trees.

In Devils Lake, submerged trees and floating debris from dead trees are threatening boaters and other water-based recreation users on the lake. The loss of trees along the water's edge will also have a negative ecological impact on the lake. Woodlands in riparian areas are important because trees stabilize soils, provide critical wildlife habitat and act as filters for pollution prevention. In an effort to replace the forestry in flood damaged communities, the N.D. Community Forestry Council, which is responsible for advising the State Forester on the administration of the state community forestry program, has decided to give priority to flood communities in the grant application process for America the Beautiful (ATB) and Community Transportation Enhancement (CTE) grant programs.

In large flood damaged communities, "green spaces" will be developed along the river corridor. The concept is to reestablish the natural floodplain that existed prior to the communities development. Homes within this area will be removed, and native vegetation resistant to flood damage will be established. The N.D. Forest Service will play an integral role in reestablishing these by providing financial and technical assistance.

N.D. Game and Fish



The N.D. Game and Fish Department (NDGF) is responsible for managing the fish and wildlife resources and habitats and activities that affect those resources. In addition, NDGF has regulatory oversight and enforcement of water safety regulations. The Law Enforcement Division of NDGF has eight qualified, trained and equipped divers who perform rescue and recovery missions, underwater investigation and numerous underwater environmental monitoring activities.

During the 1997 spring flood, NDGF assisted in the evacuation and security in and around Grand Forks. For five days immediately after the Red River overflowed its banks, eleven field wardens and one supervisor conducted several missions, using department boats and aircraft in the Grand Forks area. These missions included assisting the evacuation of governmental offices, assisting individual citizens with evacuation, conducting night surveillance in flooded areas using NDGF boats, escorting VIPs into the flooded areas by boat, and performing aerial surveillance to prevent looting.

N.D. Geological Survey



The N.D. Geological Survey (NDGS) has been studying floods in the Red River Valley since 1965. These studies involve documenting past flood events as well as predicting areas of inundation at various water levels. In addition, NDGS has been involved in several studies of the Devils Lake area over the last 100 years.

Since the flood, NDGS has been monitoring the extent of the inundation from the 1997 Red River Valley floods and comparing the areal extent of the flood to earlier predictions. In addition, NDGS has provided technical information to federal, state and local government agencies to examine the feasibility of building either a diversion tunnel or new system of dikes.

The NDGS assigned all of the flood control monitoring and response related duties to one geologist. Prior to that time, duties and responsibilities were shared by several staff members. This reassignment/realignment insures a uniform response to flood issues within our agency. In addition, we are currently mapping the surface geology of urban areas within the Red River Valley at a scale of 1:24,000. So far, portions of Grand Forks and Fargo have been completed.

N.D. Highway Patrol



The N.D. Highway Patrol (NDHP) is the functional coordinator for public safety. NDHP is responsible for coordinating statewide law enforcement for the purpose of ensuring a safe environment for the citizens of North Dakota during emergency or disaster situations. In response to the flood, NDHP utilized its Emergency Mobilization Plan and activated the Tactical Response Unit. In addition, other NDHP personnel staffed the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) which coordinates law enforcement and security operations for the area. In coordination with the NDDOT, the NDHP assisted in road closures, detour routes, traffic control, and escorts in the flood affected areas. In an effort to help its own personnel, the NDHP established the "Cops Helping Cops" program, which allowed police officers from throughout the country to donate funds to assist officers who had suffered losses from the flood.

N.D. Housing Finance Agency



The N.D. Housing Finance Agency's (NDHFA) initial response to the flood disaster was to assist flood evacuees in locating temporary housing by obtaining waivers from U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to permit vacant units in HUD Section 8 and Low Income Housing Tax Credit projects to be utilized by evacuees without regard to the normal tenancy restrictions. Currently, the NDHFA continues to help flood victims with recovery, repair, and mitigation.

In assessing the impact of the flooding on NDHFA programs and participants, the NDHFA sent letters to 580 Grand Forks first-time homeowners regarding forbearance of their May home loan payment. NDHFA also sent out a home-owners questionnaire regarding property damage assessment, the status of coverage and the employment status of homeowners. In addition, besides extending the deadlines for several of NDHFA's programs, the NDHFA created an interest rate reduction program, the Disaster Recovery Buydown Program, which is available to households which have experienced a flood-related involuntary relocation and those which have sustained more than 50 percent damage to their principal residence.

N.D. Insurance Department



The N.D. Insurance Department took quick and decisive action to help Grand Forks residents impacted by the flood of 1997. During the initial weekend of the flood, the Department added a 24-hour voice mail messaging system to the Department's 800 number, revised internal staff functions to add staffing to the hotlines, created a resource file for staff to use in assisting consumers, issued a bulletin to all insurance companies with insureds in the Red River Valley requesting that they institute a policy deferring premium payments for consumers for a period of 60 days, and issued a press release regarding the use of public adjusters in the state.

Additionally, the Insurance Department participated with private interest groups and state agencies in developing and presenting a training program and videos to brief attorneys on issues and problems relative to the flood disaster. To provide direct access to consumers, the Department co-located an office in Fargo with the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and a branch office in Grand Forks, when the residents were able to return to their homes. Finally, the Insurance Department, in conjunction with the Institute for Property Loss Reduction and the FEMA, co-sponsored a "flood insurance summit", which sought ways to enhance the flood insurance program and sales of flood insurance.

As an appendix to the State Emergency Operations Plan (SEOP), the department has developed a database (list) of catastrophe contacts for every insurance company licensed to do business in this state. This would be available to Department staff to use to assist consumers, and to the liaison to use in working with the SEOC in the event of a catastrophic event similar to the 1997 flooding. The Department identified and trained a senior staff member to act as a liaison with the SEOC, and to coordinate with other agencies as needed for on-site state agency consumer response centers.

Consumer information has been included in department brochures on homeowners insurance and on the department website with links to FEMA and NFIP. Annual early spring news releases are issued reminding consumers to review homeowners' policies and to give special attention to the risk of flood and the 30-day waiting period for coverage to take effect. In addition, the department works directly with FEMA to promote the proper training of property and casualty agents who will write Flood Insurance either directly or through the Write Your Own program.

N.D. Insurance Reserve Fund



The Claims Department of the N.D. Insurance Reserve Fund (NDIRF) has kept track of 'flood-related' claims as a separate group with \$400,000 in losses. These flood-related losses are primarily auto physical damage and inland marine (portable equipment such as lawn mowers, tractors, computers, etc...) claims. Claim losses experienced by NDIRF due to blizzard conditions are not tracked by any specific weather-related descriptor.

N.D. League of Cities



On April 26, 1997, one week into the flood disaster in the Red River Valley, Governor Schafer asked the N.D. League of Cities (NDLC) to take the leadership role in managing donations of goods and services for flood relief. Governor Schafer asked the League to establish an “effective, efficient system to collect, manage and distribute the truckloads of goods coming into the state.” To that end, the League secured a State Reception Center to warehouse the donated goods for distribution to all cities included in the presidential disaster declaration. The donated labor that was offered was inventoried the information was then provided to the local agencies that are coordinating volunteer crews. A computer registry system was developed to inventory all offers of donated goods that were called into the Donations Hotline nationwide. A special site was established on NDLC’s home page to view flood photos, send e-mail, or register an offer of donated goods or services. By late summer, the League staff and volunteers were able to transition responsibilities to staff and volunteers at the local level in Grand Forks. The donations management efforts of the N.D. League of Cities has served as a national model.

SUCSESSES

The Seventh Day Adventist Church members and the United Methodist Church members who volunteered countless hours were the saving grace of the hotline. The creation (by a student volunteer) and refinement of a donations registry made tracking and identifying donations much easier for the volunteers. The donations registry software has been sent on disk to nearly a dozen states.

FEMA personnel who accomplished the early work of volunteer training, establishing data processing for the incoming donations, and securing needed equipment were essential in the disaster response. Outstanding assistance in moving the warehouse inventory out of the hangars and into the city’s public works building was provided by the NDNG’s quartermaster unit. The soldiers not only moved the goods quickly, they completed an inventory (something that had been difficult to accomplish because of volume). This inventory was computerized (another program developed by our student volunteer) and processing the goods became much easier.

Many businesses across North Dakota sent employees to assist the valley communities, but particularly noteworthy program was initiated by the Bismarck-Mandan Chamber of Commerce. A worker registration form was faxed to the 1,000 plus Chamber-member businesses, asking employers to give people time off to volunteer. The Chamber took out several full page ads and many people responded. Offers to donate services were delivered to and then provided to the United Way in Fargo and Grand Forks for follow-up.

LESSONS LEARNED

While the donations registry software was helpful, it is not Internet-based. If the donations management system is run out of Bismarck, the people in the impact area cannot use the same database to enter their information. **Upgrade:** Convert the resource registry to an Internet site that, with passwords, can be accessed from any EOC.

Warehouse space is at a premium in this state and locating it during a disaster robs valuable time. The N.D. Economic Development & Finance Department maintains a list of available warehouse space over 20,000 square feet, but we didn’t find that out until several weeks into the disaster. **Upgrade:** Encourage communities to maintain a list of possible storage space in their EOP. Task ED&F with keeping their list current.

The lack of secure warehouse space caused problems for the duration of the operation as unauthorized personnel had access to the goods at all hours of day and night. Items promised to a distribution center the next morning sometimes disappeared overnight. **Upgrade:** An armed guard is unnecessary, but controlled access is helpful in providing service to distribution centers.

A related issue is the need for documentation in the warehouse operation. In a number of instances, we had businesses calling back for documentation of their donation for tax purposes. With different groups involving themselves in warehouse management, some records were lost in the shuffle. **Upgrade:** Contract with experienced warehouse managers and provide whatever is needed for them to do their job without interference.

Because the warehouse was run by an agency that relied on volunteers, there were several changes in management (about every two weeks). There was insufficient overlap between managers to have proper warehouse operation and distribution process orientation. **Upgrade:** The state’s donations manager should be involved in the orientation process each time to ensure a smooth transition.

The duties of Donations Coordinator were assigned a week into the disaster response. Because the management plan was incomplete and untested, much time was lost in attempts to quickly construct a system. There was considerable uncertainty about available resources and sources of assistance with donations management. **Upgrades:** The state needs to identify options for performance of this function well in advance of the next disaster. These duties should not be assigned to agencies that will likely have to place higher priority on meeting other crucial needs.

The job description should be refined in light of lessons learned. Clarify the resources that will be available to the Coordinator,

including sources of assistance. The Donations Manager's position description was developed and an employee hired several weeks into the disaster. Catching up was difficult. **Upgrade:** Refine the job description and provide training in donations management.

It was frequently unclear which distribution sites were in operation. Communication between the warehouse, voluntary agencies and distribution sites was non-existent in the beginning and inventory control was difficult. **Upgrade:** Work with the state VOAD to strengthen relationships before the next disaster.

When visiting communities like Grand Forks, considerable time was spent phoning the school districts, nursing homes, aging services, the hospital, etc. Often, they were not aware they could access the warehouse inventory. Fax information was provided to county, city and tribal governments across the state, but the information wasn't always relayed to people. **Upgrade:** Encourage city and county emergency managers to design and test a simple community response committee that includes a system for information-sharing. (Fargo and Cass County used a good model.)

NDDEM made funds available to pay room and board for a volunteer from ACS who processed the inventory data and entered all invoice information into the warehouse computer. The resulting list was provided to relief agencies which were then able to check the needs of their clients in relation to what was available. But for the ability to pay this person's expenses, we would not have had such a useful tool. **Upgrade:** Identify (limited) funds to pay expenses when volunteer help cannot be secured.

Remote warehousing (Casselton site) presented management, transportation and equipment challenges. However, for the goods that could not be distributed early in the recovery process (e.g., large appliances and building materials), other storage was important. **Upgrade:** Identify warehouse alternatives that include security and out-of-the-way space.

Insufficient or incorrect information (e.g., incorrect phone numbers or misspelled business name) negated some offers. Sometimes, we were unable to properly thank people. **Upgrade:** Ensure that all phone volunteers are thoroughly trained and have a clear understanding of the importance of accurate information.

Some items that were sent to disaster survivors were unusable. Goods were improperly packed and were destroyed in shipping. Some liquids arrived without labels and had to be treated as potentially hazardous. Some items were just plain junk. **Upgrade:** Our state needs to add its voice to the many who struggle to celebrate the generosity of people while educating them about the importance of donations that fit. A consistent message across the country is important.

The media did not always demonstrate an understanding of the donations management system and the need to be cautious in the activities they encouraged. A number of organized events would have benefited from sound planning and proper media attention. Many dripping bottles of shampoo mixed with groceries and household supplies packed in grocery store plastic bags could have been avoided. **Upgrade:** Work with the electronic and print media to educate within the industry and focus their public education efforts. The need for cash donations must receive particular emphasis.

There were many donations of valuable items, some of which would be eligible for distribution under the Individual and Family Grant (IFG) program (large appliances and basic furniture, for example). While we tried to ensure there was no duplication of benefits by working through the agencies, there may have been some duplication. **Upgrade:** Design a simple system of storage and distribution that works in concert with IFG.

The "care and feeding of volunteers" was a particularly important responsibility but time constraints made it difficult to do a good job. Because of the need to build the management system from scratch, time was not available for relationship building. Simple communication was difficult. **Upgrade:** Strengthen relationships when there are no disasters to build a system that works when it needs to be in place. Periodically debrief volunteers for their suggestions for improvements.

The importance of gratitude cannot be over emphasized. If for no other reason than to keep the donations "pipeline" open for the next disaster, it is important to say "thanks." Without good records of shipments received, it was impossible to backtrack and document corporate contributions. Periodic chaos in the warehouse operation, particularly when there was more than one group directing traffic, prevented some of the documentation. **Upgrade:** Warehouse managers need to secure the bills of lading and properly maintain files.

Relationship with local leadership is important. Although we did not encounter problems with city hall, there were not enough hours in the day to accomplish what needed to be done and maintain a flow of information. **Upgrade:** Having a tested mechanism for communication is essential. Local leaders need to be familiar with the donations management system and they need to know who to contact with questions.

"Say 'no' early and often" was the advice of an experienced donations manager. We didn't, at first. We were sorry later. **Upgrade:** Just do it!

1. The number one lesson learned: During a disaster is no time to develop a plan.

N.D. National Guard



The N.D. National Guard (NDNG) provided assistance to several other state and federal agencies to include: N.D. Department of Transportation (NDDOT), N.D. Highway Patrol (NDHP), N.D. Veterans Administration (VA), N.D. Department of Agriculture (NDAg), N.D. State Water Commission (SWC), N.D. Division of Emergency Management (NDDEM), N.D. State Fire Marshal, N.D. Parks and Recreation (NDPR), FEMA, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), U.S. Customs, and the American Red Cross.

Some of the missions and tasks the NDNG performed included: providing equipment and personnel to support aerial ice dusting, sandbagging, power generation, transportation of materials, dike patrols, traffic control, area security, ground and aerial evacuation, dike construction and repair, temporary shelter, temporary feeding, aerial fire suppression, water purification and distribution, aerial reconnaissance, recovery of livestock carcasses from waterways and the burial of these carcasses. The NDNG constructed a sandbag machine to support flood operations. The machine was transported to the requesting agency and supported with a forklift and operators.

The NDNG also launched two successful operations; Operation Good Neighbor and Operation Snowball.

OPERATION GOOD NEIGHBOR

The Governor of North Dakota authorized the use of NDNG resources to provide emergency assistance as a result of a severe spring blizzard and flooding in April 1997.

Individuals were placed on active duty based on the requests from the counties and task requirements. The 131st Quartermaster Detachment (Water Purification), the 132nd Quartermaster Company (Water Supply) and the 134th Quartermaster Detachment (Water Distribution) were the only units placed on state active duty as complete units to support potable water requirements in Grand Forks, ND. Operations centers were established by the Army National Guard in Bismarck and by the N.D. Air National Guard in Fargo.

A total of 1,886 Soldiers and Airmen have been placed on state active duty to support Operation Good Neighbor. This breaks down to 1,469 (78%) NDNG and 417 (22%) N.D. Air National Guard members. Operation Good Neighbor was the largest state activation of NDNG members in the history of the state. The highest number of members on state active duty was at 945 on April 19, 1997. Cumulative man-days had reached 22189 (18,136 for Army and 4,053 for Air).

The NDNG conducted operations in 35 of the 53 counties in North Dakota. The NDNG received assistance from the South Dakota National Guard. The Army, Air Force, and Navy Emergency Preparedness Liaison Officer's (EPLO's) were activated to assist with military support operations. They coordinated assistance from the Grand Forks Air Force Base, U.S. Coast Guard and the U.S. Army Reserve.



OPERATION SNOWBALL

On January 12, 1997; the President declared a major disaster to exist in the State of North Dakota as a result of damages caused by severe winter storms and blizzard conditions on January 11-12, 1997. The Governor of North Dakota authorized the use of NDNG resources to provide emergency response and recovery assistance to state and local governments as a result of the severe conditions.

The NDNG established operations in the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) on January 13, 1997 to support the state's coordination efforts of the N.D. Division of Emergency Management (NDDEM) during Operation Snowball.

A total of 510 Soldiers and Airmen were placed on state active duty to support Operation Snowball. Cumulative man-days reached 5,520 (5,157 for Army and 363 for Air). Operation Snowball was the largest state activation of NDNG members in the history of the state. The highest number of cumulative members on state active duty was 196 on January 19, 1997.

The primary support mission of the NDNG was to provide equipment and operators to clear snow from public areas to provide emergency access. The NDNG employed full tracked dozers, rotary snow blowers, graders, front end loaders and dump trucks as primary equipment support. Only minor accidents and injuries were experienced by members of the NDNG while every piece of equipment deployed was well maintained prior to, during and after operations.

N.D. Office of Management and Budget



In 1997, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) is composed of Fiscal Management, Information Services, Central Personnel, Central Services, Office of Intergovernmental Assistance, Facility Management, Risk Management, and State Radio.

The Fiscal Management Division of OMB serves as the central professional fiscal office of the executive branch which is responsible for statewide accounting, payroll, financial reporting, and budgeting. After the flood, Fiscal Management established special revenue and expenditure codes on the Statewide Accounting Management Information System so all expenditures related to the flood could be tracked and all revenues accounted for. In addition, Fiscal Management produced a revenue forecast to assess the impact on sales and income tax, agriculture, real estate, construction, employment, and income for the remainder of the 1995-97 biennium and for the 1997-99 biennium.

The Risk Management Division was responsible for drafting Disaster Relief Agreements between the State and the City of Grand Forks and the state and the County of Grand Forks. Risk Management also provided local authorities with authorization forms for debris removal, which the local authorities could present to private landowners prior to any debris removal activities.

The Information Services Division (ISD) assisted in establishing new telephone and data services for state and county agencies that were forced to leave their normal place of business. ISD sent a telecommunication technician to Larimore, ND, to establish data and voice services for those agencies that relocated in Larimore.

The Division of Facility Management is responsible for the development, maintenance, and preservation of the State Capitol Complex in Bismarck, North Dakota. The division also approves and keeps records of all leased office space throughout the state. During the flood, Facility Management worked with the American Red Cross and the Salvation Army to establish a collection site for flood relief donations. The division also authorized use of the visitor's parking lot to park a semi-trailer for collection of relief donations. Over a period of five weeks, 12 semi-trailer loads of recovery goods moved through the collection process.

Central Services Division provides departments and agencies centralized services to meet user needs through the administration and management of Central Duplicating, Central Supply, Purchasing, and Surplus property. During the flood, Central Duplicating provided on demand services for necessary printed materials and forms. Surplus Property focused on obtaining sandbags, food supplies, and generators to help cope with the emergency flood needs. The Surplus Property operation organized and purchased 482,000 sandbags from Japan. State Purchasing prioritized and handled emergency purchases for state agencies.

Central Personnel's primary role in the flood was to help coordinate benefits information and to recommend the use of special benefits for employees within affected agencies. Central Personnel responded to the Governor's Office request for assistance with an overall policy direction on employee needs by preparing information and recommendations for a statewide policy.

The N.D. State Radio Communications is covered in a separate section.

N.D. Secretary of State



Under the provisions of Chapter 43-07 of the N.D. Century Code (NDCC), the Secretary of State is responsible for the licensing of contractors. As a result of the flood and in anticipation that numerous contractors and merchants would be seeking licenses to work in Grand Forks, the Secretary of State, along with the Attorney General, established a One Stop Shop licensing center at the Regional Job Service Center in Grand Forks. Other participants in the "One Stop Shop" were Job Service North Dakota (JSND) and the Workers Compensation Bureau.

Besides issuing contractor and transient merchant licenses, the One-Stop Shop licensing center was also responsible for issuing photo identification badges to all contractors (whether new or existing) and all of their employees. Although ID badges had not been used in the contractor licensing process before this time, it was jointly decided among the state agencies and the city that it would be good protection for the citizens of Grand Forks if ID badges were issued. Additionally, criminal background checks were completed on each person before they were issued an ID badge. These background checks resulted in approximately 25-30 arrests for outstanding warrants.

From April 27 to May 30, 1997, the One Stop Shop issued ID cards to 1,766 employers and employees. From June 1 to July 22, 1997, the One Stop Shop and the city center issued 684 ID cards. In all, there were a total of 2,450 ID cards issued to 544 different contractors and their employees. Further from April 27 through July 22, 1997, a total of 448 contractor licenses were issued from the Office of the Secretary of State. Of these, a total of 165 licenses were issued in the Grand Forks One Stop Shop licensing center.

N.D. State Electrical Board



The N.D. State Electrical Board is responsible for safeguarding people and property from electrical hazards arising from the use of electricity for light, heat, and power. In response to the flood, the State Electrical Board immediately drafted a policy for flood damaged electrical work, and met with all electrical contractors in Grand Forks to go over policies and answer questions as to the proper procedures the contractors were to follow.

In addition, the Board coordinated with Northern States Power, Cass County Electric, and Nodak Electric to determine the number of homes and businesses that were inundated by flood waters. Volunteer electricians were used to verify dry basements, while retired electricians were hired and trained to be electrical inspectors.

N.D. State Plumbing Board

Immediately after the Red River inundated the city of Grand Forks, the N.D. State Plumbing Board, in cooperation with the N.D. Department of Health and local city governments, provided assistance with bringing on-line the potable water and waste water systems. After residents were able to return to their homes and begin rebuilding, the State Plumbing Board provided technical assistance to local plumbers.

N.D. State Radio Communications

(now known as N.D. Department of Emergency Services, Division of State Radio)



N.D. State Radio Communications (NDSR) is the State Warning Point for emergency situations. In response to the Red River Valley flooding, NDSR furnished additional radio equipment to law enforcement, the N.D. Division of Emergency Management (NDDEM), FEMA and all others associated with the flood. After the Grand Forks Public Service Answering Point for 9-1-1 was forced to evacuate, all 9-1-1 calls for Grand Forks County were transferred to NDSR. NDSR handled all their 9-1-1 calls until the first week in June. Further, NDSR had the law enforcement data circuits moved to the temporary locations of the Grand Forks Police Department and Sheriff's Office, along with Electronic Communications, Inc., of Bismarck, furnished the equipment to enable them to get back on line for law enforcement data communications.

When the One Stop Shop was set up for streamlining the process for transient merchants and contractors licensing, the Bureau of Criminal Investigation would fax information to NDSR, who would then make inquiries on the individuals via the National Crime Information Center and the State Criminal Warrant Information System. If information came back that an individual was wanted, NDSR would notify the Bureau of Criminal Investigation. Through this process, more than 20 arrests were made and approximately 24 illegal aliens were identified.

N.D. State Water Commission



The N.D. State Water Commission (SWC) is responsible for the management and regulation of the use of water resources in the state of North Dakota. The SWC is divided into five divisions: Administration, Planning and Education, Water Appropriation, Water Development and the Atmospheric Resource Board. All five divisions, and nearly all employees, were involved with and contributed significantly to the 1997 flood relief effort.

During the first two weeks of the flood, the SWC supported the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) on a 24-hour basis. Working with the SEOC, the SWC monitored river stages and flows, provided flood updates at daily briefings, and arranged for flood fighting equipment and supplies to areas of need. Further, the SWC coordinated with county water resource districts and county commissions on a daily basis throughout the state to provide technical information and flood stage forecasts to areas not included in the National Weather Service (NWS) forecasts. When the pipe spillway for the Iverson Dam near Leeds, North Dakota, failed on April 23, 1997, SWC staff completed a dam breaching operation and used two large pumps to lower the reservoir's water level.

Other flood response efforts of the SWC engaged in were developing maps of areas inundated, modifying HEC-2 hydraulic models to identify potential inundation areas, assisting in the location and construction of the Washington Street emergency dike in Grand Forks, assisting the city of Grand Forks and the NDNG with developing an emergency water supply, and assisting the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) with stream gauging. As for recovery efforts, the SWC has met with Grand Forks officials and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to discuss alternative flood projects and locations.

In addition to assisting Grand Forks, the SWC has been very active with the Devils Lake flooding situation. As the local sponsor for the Devils Lake outlet, the SWC and the USACE have conducted many studies and held meetings on the alternative sizes and alignment, and downstream impacts. SWC has also contributed funding to the city of Devils Lake for cost share on a flood levee projection project.

N.D. Supreme Court



On Monday morning, April 21, 1997, representatives from the N.D. Supreme Court, State Bar Association of North Dakota and Legal Assistance of North Dakota met to discuss what needed to be done, and what could be done in light of the almost total devastation of Grand Forks and East Grand Forks that had occurred over the weekend. Telephone banks, document preservation, temporary office space for attorneys and judges, locating displaced attorneys and judges and the coordination of efforts with FEMA were discussed. The Court was urged to adopt an emergency order to alleviate uncertainty and hardship in pending cases.

Administrative Order 8 was adopted by the N.D. Supreme Court on April 23, 1997. This Order provided a 60-day extension of any deadline required by procedural statute or rule, or by order of a District Court, or by notice given under a procedural statute or rule, occurring between April 19 and June 18, 1997. The extension applies to: 1) cases venued in Grand Forks County, 2) to cases wherever venued in which one or more of the parties resides in Grand Forks County or in East Grand Forks, Minnesota, and 3) to cases wherever venued in which one or more of the parties is represented by an attorney residing in Grand Forks County or in East Grand Forks, Minnesota.

If deadlines for commencing an action in a civil case were between April 19 and June 18, 1997, Administrative Order 8 included a 60-day stay from the date a statute of limitation or repose would otherwise bar the claim. This extension applied to the same considerations as stated above. To ensure the continuation of judicial services in Grand Forks County, the N.D. Supreme Court further ordered that cases venued in Grand Forks County could be moved to or filed in the temporary clerk of court's office at Larimore, and heard in Lakota or elsewhere as directed by the presiding judge.

The Supreme Court web page provided information on temporary addresses for the judges and clerks in the District, as well as displaced attorneys, and other relevant law-related information, including notices from the Federal District Court. Throughout the flood crisis, the N.D. Supreme Court was in contact with the judges and clerk of court for Grand Forks County, and the State Bar Association in order to keep informed and provide assistance as necessary. The entry of Administrative Order 8 provided necessary relief to allow attorneys and litigants from Grand Forks and East Grand Forks to focus on refurbishing and rebuilding homes and communities.

N.D. Tax Department



The primary function of the Office of the N.D. Tax Commissioner is to administer taxes imposed by the N.D. Legislature. Therefore, the Department's focus in responding to 1997's blizzard and flood related disasters was to ease the tax return filing and compliance requirements whenever possible.

The Tax Department's primary activity during the 1997 flood was to more closely coordinate our efforts with IRS. In addition the department provided federal forms in our office that we would send out to taxpayers along with the ND forms in order to save taxpayers calling two offices. To help with recovery efforts, the Tax Department provided taxpayers with copies of previously filed income, sales, and income tax withholding returns needed to replace records lost during the flooding and to apply for disaster assistance. The Department also initiated payment agreements with taxpayers that were unable to pay taxes because of the disaster.

The Tax Commission granted extensions for filing individual tax returns and extensions for tax withholding and sales tax returns for businesses located in Cass, Pembina, and Richland counties and for the cities of Grand Forks and East Grand Forks. During the extension periods, all penalties and interest were waived. Furthermore, the Department identified property tax statutes that could be suspended by executive order allowing adjustments to property valuations by an Assessor. The assessor could then review and adjust the valuations of flood damaged property without requiring the property owner to file an application for abatement.

N.D. Tourism Department

(now known as N.D. Department of Commerce, Tourism Division)



This past spring's flood disaster in the Red River Valley had a short and long-term impact on the state's tourism industry. It was the Tourism Department's mission to help these flood stricken communities deal with immediate tourism issues, such as the closing of attractions, road reports, the canceling of events, as well as overcoming the long-term impact of decreased visitation to North Dakota due to misconceptions and fears about the flood.

The Department's primary mission was to contact industry people at the local convention and visitors' bureaus, chambers of commerce, or individual attractions to assess any damages. This included whether attractions were closed, events were canceled, and whether the closings and cancellations were temporary or permanent. This information was passed on to potential travelers and the public. Another important tactic included contacting local people or the N.D. Department of Transportation (NDDOT) to assess road conditions and identify what roads were closed so NDDOT could warn travelers and direct them to alternative routes.

N.D. Tourism Department *(continued)*

The flood disaster and its prominence in the national and international media not only impacted Grand Forks, but also the entire state. The public's perception resulting from the negative publicity was that the entire state was flooded, not just Grand Forks. Therefore, in anticipation of a decrease in visitation by out of state travelers, the Department launched an aggressive in-state advertising campaign, featuring Governor Schafer, encouraging North Dakotans to vacation in "their own backyard" this summer.

The campaign was so successful that North Dakota inquiries increased 439% in June 1997 over June 1996. Several attractions throughout the state reported increased visitation ranging from 5% to 137%, with North Dakotans comprising a large percentage of the visitors. The Department also implemented a regional and national public relations campaign to begin overcoming the negative impact and misperceptions from the flood.

To help the Red River Valley with its promotional efforts, the 1998-99 N.D. Highway map will feature many tourism opportunities existing along the banks of the Red River. Next year, the Department's tourism guides and publications will feature more heavily on the Red River Valley and another regional and national public relations campaign will be implemented.

N.D. Workers Compensation Bureau

(now known as N.D. Workforce Safety and Insurance)



One week after the flood, a representative from the N.D. Workers Compensation Bureau, along with several staff members from other state agencies, traveled to Grand Forks to establish the "One Stop Shop" merchant and contractor licensing program. Because of the significant increase in out-of-state workers and contractors doing business in Grand Forks, the Bureau decided to impose a stricter policy as to the out of state employers' minimum contacts requiring North Dakota workers compensation coverage. The stricter policy was applied to all Grand Forks registrants with employees and required the establishment of a N.D. Workers Compensation account, regardless of their otherwise applicable "other-states" coverage. This simple, clear policy allowed faster processing of applications, simplified ongoing compliance enforcement and will promote the full reporting of all North Dakota payroll for premium collection.

From the Grand Forks location alone, the Bureau opened 101 new employer accounts. For those new accounts, the Bureau billed annual premiums of nearly \$204,000 and immediately collected initial payments of almost \$84,000 of that amount. In addition, the screening of contractors allowed the Bureau to collect over \$40,000 of severely delinquent premiums before allowing the registration of the employer.

State Historical Society of North Dakota



The State Historical Society of North Dakota took early action when the many late winter blizzards struck and the threat of flooding became imminent. Because there are numerous historic sites, museums, galleries and historic buildings and districts along waterways, especially the Red River, the possibility of significant damage due to flooding was great. When the flood struck, the Society began to coordinate local, state, regional, and national efforts.

In response to the impending threat of flooding, the museum staff took early action by calling, writing, and working directly with historic sites, museums, zoos, and galleries throughout the state, to give them information regarding flood assistance and to determine the amount of damage these entities have sustained. In addition, the museum staff, along with the State Archivist, went to Grand Forks and spent several days working with volunteers they recruited statewide, to salvage, clean and dry most of the contents of the Grand Forks County Historical Society's damaged exhibits.



The Society's archeological and historic preservation staff efforts were directed at review of the impact of federally-funded flood relief project on cultural resources in the state. Particular efforts in Grand Forks focused on providing mapping and location information to the city of Grand Forks and FEMA regarding the location of historic properties and districts within the city's boundaries, and identifying the rest of the city that remain unsurveyed. Other efforts in Grand Forks include providing printed information to owners of historic properties regarding methods to return their historic buildings to habitable/useable status while preserving their significant historic features, and awarding the city of Grand Forks a grant to hire a staff person for the Grand Forks Historic Preservation Commission.

University of North Dakota



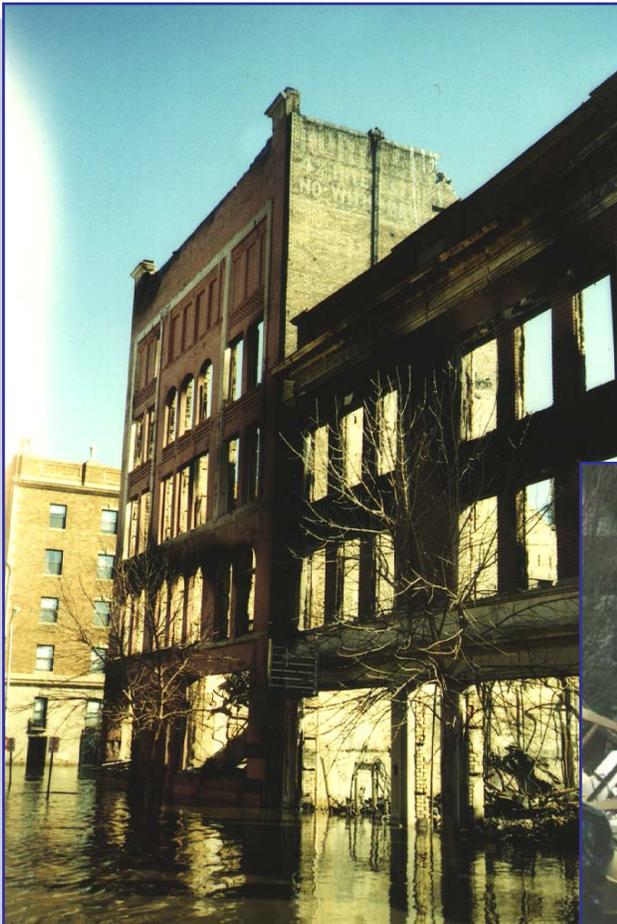
The city and University of North Dakota (UND) felt prepared for a record 49 foot crest of the Red River of the North. The previous record had been 48.8 feet. But, fueled by an ice storm which morphed into a three-day-long blizzard, the Red River of the North rose so high that it flooded the gauges that measured it. It overran roads, bridges, and most of the cities of Grand Forks and East Grand Forks to crest at 54.11 feet, nearly twice as high as the flood stage of 28 feet. Eats Grand Forks and most of Grand Forks, as well as the University, were evacuated. Classes were cancelled three weeks early, marking the first time since World War I and II that classes ended early. Later, we could find that the flood was the largest disaster in U.S. history, measured by per capita damage and relocation of people.

The war against the flood was fought on many fronts, but UND became an indispensable battleground, providing space and services to the Emergency Operations Center, Grand Forks Police, Grand Forks city government, the Grand Forks Herald, N.D. National Guard (NDNG) , N.D. Department of Transportation (NDDOT) , the American Red Cross (ARC) , Salvation Army, U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and FEMA as well as hosting one of the only radio stations left on the air and providing the only source of health care in the city.

UND's residence halls housed 728 faculty and staff members and their families after the flood, 656 members of the community, 164 FEMA and SBA employees and 412 utility workers, for a total of 1,960 people. The Hyslop Sports Center housed 4, 955 volunteers after the emergency. This was especially difficult given the lack of basic services such as water and electricity. In addition, UND housed 38 businesses which had been flooded out

A "Virtual University" was established, functioning from one small room, allowing UND to operate, recover, and inform students. This helped the University respond to the many constituents' needs, to answer questions and to begin the process of saving UND's enrollment.

UND's president decided to hold summer school on schedule. This decision rallied the flood team and helped stem enrollment drops, as well as bringing in needed income. An Off-Campus Housing Office was set up to facilitate housing searches for students. This aided in maintaining student enrollment.



N.D. Division of Emergency Management

(now known as N.D. Department of Emergency Services, Division of Homeland Security)



During the 1996-97 winter, a series of paralyzing blizzards impacted every North Dakota. The subsequent snowmelt and thaw of land already saturated during the previous fall resulted in disastrous overland flooding. Flood waters forced more than 50,000 North Dakotans from their homes and caused in unprecedented damage. In the Red River Valley, flooding that is only expected to occur every 500 years forced the evacuation of nearly every Grand Forks resident. The flood left images that will remain part of our collective conscious in years to come – rescue workers airlifting stranded North Dakotans from swift flood waters: rows of cots at shelters for thousands of evacuees; and firefighters lugging heavy equipment through ice-cold water to fight flames that destroyed 11 historic buildings in downtown Grand Forks.

The flood required a comprehensive, cohesive response that tested the State Emergency Operations Plan (SEOP), as well as the flexibility and durability of local, state, federal, private and volunteer resources.

RESPONSE EFFORTS

The first precursor of flooding evolved last fall when above average precipitation left land with a higher than normal water content. During winter, heavy snowfall broke record levels. When the snow melted, record runoff occurred on frozen soil too saturated to absorb the additional moisture. This flood represented the fifth consecutive year of flooding that resulted in a Major Presidential Disaster Declaration.

North Dakota's response to the disaster is the result of the accomplishments of a statewide team, organized by the State Emergency Operations Plan (SEOP) and facilitated by the N.D. Division of Emergency Management (NDDEM). The SEOP offers an all-hazards approach to managing emergencies and calls upon the expertise of nearly 40 state agencies. NDDEM coordinates response and recovery efforts by these state agencies. The SEOP has been used as a model for planning, response, recovery and mitigation by other states.

When the disaster struck many agencies such as NDDEM, the State Water Commission (SWC), the N.D. National Guard (NDNG), the N.D. Highway Patrol (NDHP) and the N.D. Department of Transportation (NDDOT), staffed the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) around the clock. NDDOT and NDHP tackled road and safety issues. The SWC tracked the flood's progress and helped secure pumps for flooded communities. NDNG and Emergency Preparedness Liaison Officers (EPLOs) representing the U.S. Army, U.S. Navy and U.S. Air Force coordinated military resources such as rescue helicopters, engineering equipment and personnel. The N.D. Department of Agriculture (NDAg) established the Agriculture Disaster Response Center as a central referral source was needed to provide information and assistance to rural residents, especially farmers and ranchers.

When the dikes were overtopped in Grand Forks, the Governor arrived at the SEOC in the wee hours of the morning along with the Director of the N.D. Department of Human Services (NDDHS) and the Chancellor of the N.D. University System (NDUS) to help arrange for shelter for flood victims. The N.D. Department of Health (NDDoH) organized medical care for evacuees.

RECOVERY EFFORTS

Response and recovery efforts overlapped with little, if any, distinction between the two phases. While the western and central parts of the state began their recovery from flooding, eastern waterways swelled to record levels and inundated million acres of land and thousands of homes.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) established a temporary Disaster Field Office (DFO) adjacent to the SEOC before relocating to a larger facility accommodating hundreds of employees. Federal and military officials assisted state officials in managing both response and recovery efforts. Three FEMA disaster recovery programs were initiated in response to the disaster's aftermath – Individual Assistance, Public Assistance and Hazard Mitigation Grant Program.

SUCCESSSES

The level of involvement from state agencies was unprecedented. Functional and task coordinators performed tasks as outlined by the SEOP, dedicating countless hours to response and recovery work. The demands of the assigned duties were such that agencies directly involved in the flood fight staffed the SEOC 24-hours a day. Our SEOP provided an excellent framework for coordinating response and recovery efforts of the nearly 40 state agencies.

Before the disaster, NDDEM actively pursued and promoted flood preparedness measures for communities and individuals. NDDEM also supported hazard mitigation efforts taken in advance of flooding to include ice dusting, the waiver of National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) requirements for the Devils Lake area and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) efforts to institute temporary flood protection measures in many communities throughout the state. NDDEM staff participated in many

N.D. Division of Emergency Management *(continued)*

community awareness meetings designed to encourage flood readiness. NDDEM already had in place updated administrative plans for Hazard Mitigation, Public Assistance and the Individual and Family Grant Programs. These plans enabled the agency to proceed in a timely manner in administering these disaster recovery programs with only minor revisions were needed to satisfy FEMA requirements for current administrative plans.

Despite the catastrophic nature of the disaster, federal, state, local and volunteer and private resources worked in partnership to resolve problems quickly. A cadre of retired NDDHS and NDDOT as well as temporary employees from the N.D. Legislative Council allowed NDDEM to quickly establish its Public Assistance and Individual and Family Grant Programs. Their expertise reduced training time requirements. Individual and Family Grant Program Disaster Assistance Employees from FEMA, Iowa and other states provided excellent training to applicant processors.

Daily briefings held during the disaster allowed state and federal agencies to discuss weather conditions, damages, river levels, community and individual needs, and requests for assistance. These briefings assisted functional and task coordinators in their efforts to decide the best allocation of resources. In addition, as of October 10 NDDEM produced 68 Situation Reports. Support received from state and federal agencies in providing timely, accurate information was outstanding and allowed NDDEM to adhere as close as possible to its publication schedule. These Situation Reports were posted on the NDDEM web site allowing the Joint Information Center (JIC) to refer reporters for additional information, saving the JIC invaluable time for addressing issues. NDDEM kept track of messages, requests for assistance and actions taken to address those requests through use of the Emergency Information Systems (EIS) software.

LESSONS LEARNED

State Emergency Operations Plan (SEOP)

The disaster underscored the importance of keeping existing plans current, but also pointed out areas where additional plans or revisions are necessary in the SEOP. NDDEM did not have adequate plans in place for addressing unsolicited donations. The N.D. League of Cities (NDLC) stepped forward and took responsibility for receiving and distributing an overwhelming amount of donations. NDLC did so with minimal plans and hazy expectations of the work required.

The catastrophic nature of the disaster taxed the plans and capabilities of agencies directly involved in mass care and sheltering issues. The late night evacuation of Grand Forks required several agencies with available housing to assemble at the SEOC to establish mass care sites. Although plans were vague and inadequate, these agencies managed to respond promptly to the needs of disaster victims.

The Public Works Annex to the SEOP also presented problems because functions were too broad to be contained in one annex. Uncertainty developed during the response phases as to what agencies had authority for the various tasks. Although many agencies were prepared for their responsibilities under the SEOP, others did not fully realize what their tasks would entail. A few agencies also were unaware of the importance of working through the SEOC to ensure the best coordination of resources.

NDDEM continues its annual update to the SEOP and its attachments and reference materials. In addition, NDDEM will take corrective actions in response to deficiencies noted during the disaster. Corrections to deficiencies in the donations management plan are already underway with the assistance of the NDLC. A more detailed plan will be developed identifying a state agency responsible for coordinating donations. NDDEM will assist the responsible agency in developing a plan that outlines the concept of operations, tasks and duties required.

Mass care and shelter issues will also be re-evaluated. Objectives of such efforts include determining agencies best able to address mass care and shelter needs and developing plans that more clearly reflect their responsibilities. These plans should then be exercised periodically to ensure each agency understand their role and to point out strengths and deficiencies of such plans.

Because the Public Works annex is so broad, NDDEM plans to divide it into two separate annexes, transportation and engineering. Content of both annexes will be designed to more clearly define roles of agencies with transportation and engineering functions.

In response to the uncertainty of a few agencies about their roles in disasters, NDDEM recommends conducting more briefings with such agency personnel to explain the SEOP and the important role they play in the plan. The objective is to encourage participation in the plan and ownership of duties.

State Emergency Operations Center

The flooding disaster underlined the importance of having functional and task coordinators in one central location at the SEOC. Coordinators could better determine how to match available resources with needs. However, the demands of response and recovery

N.D. Division of Emergency Management *(continued)*

work required state agencies to staff the SEOC for extended hours. Work by some agencies required around the clock staffing of the SEOC. Because of construction in the SEOC in 1997, task and functional coordinators were relocated to an alternate SEOC that lacked adequate telephone and computer lines.

Flow of information was difficult to manage given the magnitude of information processed. Specific information was not readily available making personnel changes, shift changes and general continuity difficult. During the response phase, state and federal agencies occasionally duplicated efforts to procure resources which is attributed, in part, to the differences in terminology. Federal agencies used the Emergency Support Functions (ESFs) while state agencies based their functions on the SEOP annexes. With a very overtaxed state response operation, the information flow and status of mission assignments were difficult to follow.

As this disaster dictated, state agencies, including NDDEM, will need to be prepared to staff the SEOC for longer hours. Plans for the new SEOC, which is under construction (*in 1997*), should correct many of the discomforts confronting functional and task coordinators, including availability of telephone and computer lines, as well as work space.

In response to information flow difficulties, closer coordination between state and federal counterparts is recommended to avoid duplication of efforts. A more thorough understanding of responsibilities of federal and state counterparts will enhance response efforts. Revisions are recommended to the SEOP to include more detailed operations information flow that includes military and ESF functions. Within the SEOC, status boards should not only track state resources utilized, but federal resources, as well.

State-Federal Coordination

Coordination between state and federal disaster workers was generally outstanding; however, some problems developed when FEMA workers were ready to begin fieldwork but state workers and resources were needed for response efforts. The nature of the disaster was such that while recovery work was underway in the western part of the state response work had just begun in the east.

To more effectively use resources, State and FEMA should develop a start-up schedule to better coordinate assets and enhance both response and recovery work.

Situation Reports

Support from state and federal agencies in providing accurate and timely information allowed NDDEM to produce Situation Reports on schedule and with few errors. However, some actions taken by state agencies were not immediately reported to NDDEM and a couple-day delay occurred in reporting such information.

Because the Situation Reports provide an historical perspective and documentation of damages and actions, it is imperative that state and federal agencies continue to provide information for these reports. In order to ensure that all agencies continue such efforts, NDDEM may consider issuing a reminder at the onset to all functional and task coordinators to provide such information. Producers of the Situation Reports should develop a contact list of each agency that lists persons responsible for disseminating information.

Individual and Family Grant Program

The Individual and Family Grant program staff, had limited space at the Disaster Field Office (DFO). Hence, NDDEM was not able to hire more employees as recommended by staffing formulas developed by FEMA. Staff members also struggled to keep up with the workload, initially because the program was limited in the number of hours and days allowed for work due to overtime costs. The overwhelming number of cases became more manageable with temporary support given by FEMA National Teleregistration and two employees from the state of Iowa who traveled to North Dakota to assist with case review.

NDDEM recommends adhering to staffing formulas and ensuring adequate space for staff members so that applications can be processed in a more timely fashion and money distributed to flood victims. NDDEM should also develop a list of applicant processors and conduct regular training for them, as well as NDDHS staff members who participated in producing Damage Survey Reports. Other recommendations include the continuation of temporary support from other states. Such action not only assists the state in responding to the disaster but also offers training opportunities for other states.

Public Assistance Program

Public Assistance inspectors and fellow staff members worked long, demanding hours in response to the large volume of work necessitated by the disaster. Many state and federal inspectors are retired and not accustomed to such strenuous hours. Damage Survey Reports (DSRs) are still written by hand (*in 1997*), causing delays processing such reports. Additionally, state and federal inspectors expressed their uncertainty about writing DSRs for building repairs.

N.D. Division of Emergency Management *(continued)*

Twelve-hour days for six days per week are satisfactory for an initial period of the disaster, but those hours should be eventually reduced to 10-hour days for six or seven days a week. Shorter workdays and workweeks for prolonged recovery periods will reduce fatigue and the number of mistakes. The results will include more efficient, accurate reports, less quality control requirements and better customer service.

NDDEM also recommends that FEMA consider supplying each inspection team with a laptop computer and digital camera if such technology is found to be cost effective. Additional training in building inspection is recommended, as is assigning inspectors to specifically addressed multi-dwelling building inspections.

NDDEM strongly recommends that FEMA return to the Federal-State-Local team approach used during the winter storm disaster. Presently, either a state or federal inspector accompanies a local inspector. However, as was proven during the winter storm disaster, a Federal-State-Local team expedites DSRs and increases efficiencies.

Hazard Mitigation Grant Program

Several state agencies are separately managing federal and state funds, which are directly or indirectly related to flood hazard reduction. Local governments are not familiar with the criteria of each program; the required applications are, many times, too lengthy and the required environmental surveys are difficult to understand. Because they do not have the staff to complete the project application, these entities sometimes miss an opportunity to receive funding for long-term solutions to their flooding problems.

During recovery, representatives of FEMA Mitigation performed grantee tasks and gave grantee-level assistance without prior coordination with the state. Representatives went as far as writing acquisition applications for the city of Grand Forks and compiling data of damaged homes for city officials. NDDEM Mitigation officials were never approached by the city to secure outside assistance, or by FEMA for state permission to give outside assistance to local officials. We were, in essence, left out of the loop.

As part of recovery efforts, FEMA mitigation specialists developed an accelerated Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) application for use by local officials planning acquisition projects. The accelerated application, while a viable concept, was not adequately staffed to determine strengths and weaknesses prior to distribution to local officials. Applications that were submitted missed essential elements of information.

Revisions to the HMGP application project should be pursued. NDDEM recommends one simplified project application, including an environmental assessment, for local governments to apply to one agency. A funding committee comprised of federal and state agencies would review the applications.

In addition, NDDEM mitigation staff and FEMA mitigation staff should develop a partnership between federal, state and local governments. A risk assessment will be conducted by NDDEM to help establish multi-hazard mitigation plans in all 53 counties.

Tracking Costs

NDDEM received many requests for information about flood-related costs from the media, federal and state agencies, the congressional delegation and even foreign embassies. These requests, while important, required additional time for staff members to research questions, requiring them to divert attention away from response and recovery work.

NDDEM recommends assigning a statistician to keep track of these costs. This would enable staff to address such questions quickly, and would help prevent duplication when recording costs.

This document was assembled by the
N.D. Department of Emergency Services,
Division of Homeland Security,
with the support of the multiple state agencies
that responded to the 1997 disasters
and continue to support the
State Emergency Operations Plan.



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