



Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Local State of Emergency Extended; Drop-off Sites to Be Added

Grand Traverse County – As recovery and debris management efforts continue to move forward, at the request of the county’s Emergency Management Coordinator, Gregg Bird, the Grand Traverse County Board of Commissioners last night voted unanimously to extend the local state of emergency declaration to August 23. A state of emergency was declared earlier this week on Monday in response to the devastating storm of Sunday.

During the Public Health and Safety Committee meeting on Wednesday, Bird reminded commissioners that the storm and its aftereffects should be considered as a long-term incident with the goal of “total recovery to better than before.”

The county assessor’s office has been working nonstop to evaluate damages, in accordance with federal procedures requiring that an initial assessment be concluded within 72 hours of a declaring a state of emergency. The resulting initial assessment indicates nearly \$16 million in losses within Grand Traverse County, with over \$9 million in damages to property owned by private citizens, and over \$6 million in damages to public facilities, which includes debris removal costs; road expenses; damage to public buildings, equipment, and utilities; and parks and recreational properties and facilities.

Today, Bird again met with the community’s emergency response team, composed of key county, city, and state officials, along with area emergency, fire, public safety, police, and power company representatives. The most important outcome of today’s meeting, according to Bird, “is to put the final coordination steps in place to open up three debris dropoff sites that are expected to be operational within the next 24 to 48 hours.” As soon as all of the details are in place, Bird said, a dedicated press release featuring details, location, hours of operation, and a description of acceptable debris (such as trees and limbs) will be issued.

Bird also said the final coordination phases of deploying Team Rubicon to the area are in place. Team Rubicon is a non-profit group that unites the skills and experiences of military veterans with first responders to provide emergency response services. For more information, visit the website <http://www.teamrubiconusa.org/>.

Citizens are advised to continue to beware of potential fraudulent situations and individuals. “Make sure you use certified, qualified contractors, and work through your insurance company,” advises Bird. No federal or state monies have been committed to the relief effort in this area, so be suspicious of anyone who claims affiliation with contractors from FEMA or the State of Michigan.

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