

**IN THIS SECTION**

Hurricanes Katrina and Rita

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The Department of the Interior deployed more than 6,100 personnel in response to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, with a peak deployment of 2,304 personnel at the height of operations. Emergency response activities have included interagency assistance under the National Response Plan; public safety on Departmental lands and mutual aid to surrounding communities; restoration of bureau capabilities to execute essential functions; and recovery activities for DOI lands and offices. A total of \$71.3 million has been committed to support missions assigned under the National Response Plan, and \$21.1 million for response on Interior lands. At this date, 108 employees remain assigned to hurricane duties.

Support Provided under the National Response Plan

ESF #3 (Public Works & Engineering): Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) has responsibility for coordination of the Department's support to ESF #3, which is led by the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). 940 employees from 11 DOI bureaus and offices have been deployed on ESF-3 missions. DOI employees provided quality assurance for the "blue roof" (temporary roofing repairs) and debris removal missions, and supported health and safety oversight. DOI employees also assisted FEMA with the Public Assistance Program. At the peak of operations 377 DOI employees were deployed to the various hurricane disaster areas. 58 personnel remain assigned to hurricane operations this data. BOR provided an emergency water purification unit, which supplied potable water for the Biloxi Regional Medical Center. Also, BOR provided technical assistance to USACE for repair of levees on Lake Pontchartrain and facilitated additional support from US Geological Survey (USGS) for LIDAR imagery and monitoring of flood stages.

ESF #4 (Firefighting): Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and Bureau of Indian Affairs are member agencies of the National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) and National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC), which provides support to FEMA in all hazard emergencies. A total of 2,623 DOI employees have deployed on ESF #4 missions, managing mobilization centers and base camps for Federal, state and local emergency responders in Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas; receiving and distributing equipment and relief supplies; and coordinating the staging of mobile homes for disaster victims. ESF #4 also coordinated the provision of wildland fire aviation assets which proved useful in suppression of fires in flooded areas of New Orleans which were inaccessible by local fire departments.

ESF #10 (Oil and Hazardous Materials Response): The Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance (OEPC) serves as the Department's lead for ESF #10. OEPC has Pollution Removal Funding Authorizations for DOI support for Katrina and Rita spill response in TX, AL, MS and LA totaling almost \$1.8 million. This funding supported participation of a total of 60 staff from OEPC, FWS, NPS, and MMS in ESF 10 activities related to the two hurricanes, including response to 6 major and 3 medium oil spills, as well as hundreds of smaller spills and thousands of hazmat sources deposited in environmentally sensitive areas by storm surges. No one is currently deployed. The primary activities have been to evaluate Departmental lands and natural resources at risk in affected areas and to provide technical assistance for clean-up decision-making and regarding environmental aspects of debris removal. OEPC also obtained a Mission Assignment for one FWS personnel to support to the un-watering of New Orleans, with total funding of \$50,000.

ESF #11 (Agriculture & Natural Resources): USGS (National Wildlife Health Center) has the department's lead for the portion of ESF #11 involving animal and plant disease; USGS has performed water quality sampling to assist FEMA and local officials. OEPC has the federal lead for the portion of ESF #11 involving Protection of Natural and Cultural Resources and Historic Properties (NCH). A total of 62 personnel have been deployed in response to Hurricane Katrina under 6 Mission Assignments with a reimbursable ceiling of \$1,096,620. Personnel still deployed are one from the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, 3 from NPS, and one from USDA. Accomplishments include: preservation assistance to numerous museums and collections; historic preservation surveys; technical preservation assistance; Geographic Information Systems (GIS) support for historic preservation; archeological site surveys, threatened and endangered species consultations, and wetlands surveys associated with installation of temporary facilities (e.g., housing), demolitions, and removal of non-hazardous debris; outreach and consultation with Tribes; assistance in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act and the National Historic Preservation Act for projects funded by FEMA; and guidance on best practices in surveying impacted cultural resources.

ESF #13 (Public Safety and Security): The Department's Office of Law Enforcement and Security coordinates ESF #13 activities with the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Justice. During peak operations, 45 personnel were providing law enforcement services at Red Cross facilities in New Orleans under EFS #13. In addition to ESF #13 missions, DOI law enforcement personnel deployed to provide security for ESF #4 operations, which were forced to suspend some critical operations in the New Orleans area during civil disorders early in the operation. In several instances, bureaus also provided law enforcement assistance as mutual aid to jurisdictions neighboring DOI and Tribal lands. A total of 365 DOI law enforcement officers (BIA, BLM, FWS, and NPS) were deployed during Katrina response operations.

Other Support: USGS coordinated the deployment of three NPS specialists to assist ESF-14 (Long-Term Community Recovery and Mitigation). Office of the Inspector General is providing 1 FEMA volunteer who is assisting a contract officer responsible for the construction of trailer parks for temporary housing in 10 parishes in LA.

Departmental Response Activities

Bureau of Indian Affairs: At peak operations, support to Tribal communities, 32 BIA personnel were deployed in response activities on reservations. In addition to responding on Tribal lands and providing mutual aid, 532 BIA personnel have supported ESF activities under the National Response Plan. During Katrina, law enforcement personnel responded to support public safety activities at the Mississippi Choctaw reservation, and provided supplies including food, ice and fuel for shelters which were opened for Tribal and non-Tribal evacuees. During Hurricane Rita, BIA law enforcement responded to Alabama-Coushatta Reservation support tribal public safety operations. In addition to serving Tribal communities, BIA provided mutual aid assistance at the request of the St. Bernard Parish Sheriff, whose officers homes were devastated by the storm. BIA police were supported by tribal police from the Mashantucket Pequot Tribe, Mohegan Tribe, Miccosukkee Tribe, Seminole Tribe, and the Oneida Nation during these operations. In addition to responding on Tribal lands and providing mutual aid, 532 BIA personnel have supported ESF activities under the National Response Plan.

Minerals Management Service: MMS is responsible for regulation of off-shore oil and gas production, and provides oversight to assure that off-shore facilities can safely operate before production is resumed. MMS took a number of actions to facilitate the process of returning energy resources to America, consistent with the need for safety. These measures included expediting review of requests for temporary barging of oil or flaring of small amounts of natural gas; expediting approval process for pipeline repairs; and waiving of cost recovery fees until January 2006. MMS initiated repairs to its heavily damaged regional headquarters in New Orleans. Approximately 150 personnel were engaged in maintaining continuous agency

operations from a temporary office in Houston. At this date, 38 personnel remain assigned to hurricane-related duties.

National Park Service: A total of 1894 NPS personnel were deployed in response to Hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Wilma, including 229 personnel to support FEMA ESF activities under the National Response Plan. Over 100,000 cubic yards of debris and a ton of hazardous materials and wastes have been removed from Gulf Island National Seashore; the main campground is now operational and is being used by FEMA for displaced people. Valuable cultural resources were removed from Jean Lafitte and secured at Natchez Trace. The US Park Police deployed Eagle One helicopter from Washington, DC, to support NPS operations during the height of the emergency.

US Fish and Wildlife Service: At the height of operations 368 FWS personnel were assigned to operations on refuge lands and to support FEMA ESF activities under the National Response Plan. A total of 675 FWS employees were deployed in response to Hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Wilma. FWS operated a base camp at its refuges in Lacombe, LA, which provided shelter for local emergency workers, FEMA staff and international Red Cross teams; provided food for 1,400 people including patients at the local hospital; and deployed teams utilizing airboats and flat-bottom boats to support local search and rescue operations including removal of deceased from a flooded nursing home as well as security and law enforcement support. Crews cleared debris from local fire departments in Hancock County, MS, to make way for temporary equipment and assisted Terrebonne Parish, LA officials inspecting flood protection levees during Hurricane Rita.

US Geological Survey: A total of 390 USGS employees deployed on Hurricane response operations, including 145 personnel in support of ESF#3 activities under the National Response Plan. USGS employees replaced or repaired numerous damaged stream and coastal gages throughout the region to restore flood warning capacity and NWS flood forecasting capability. The USGS Storm Response Team coordinated tactical response between offices and with other federal agencies leading up to, during and after the storm. The Bureau provided geospatial information, maps, and satellite images to a wide variety of users. Scientific assessments were conducted to help with response and recovery operations including sampling and testing of surface and ground water. USGS scientists also collected a tremendous amount of post-storm data to help assess the hydrologic impacts and extent of flooding, geomorphic coastal change, and to assess the impacts to biological habitats. USGS, in cooperation with NASA, provided LIDAR elevation data to BOR in the earliest assessments of the levee breaches in New Orleans. Daily aerial photography and high scale imagery maps were provided by USGS to determine the status of the cities in the recovery phase. During the emergency response phase, USGS provided numerous personnel, boats, and other equipment to assist with humanitarian efforts.

USGS geographers provided approximately 9,000 pinpoint location maps developed from 911 call information to aid in search and rescue efforts.

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