

Dear NASS Colleagues,

We would like to share this message from North Carolina Secretary of State Elaine Marshall regarding Hurricane Florence aftermath:

Over the last several days, various Secretary of State "family" and acquaintances have inquired about the state of things here in Raleigh, North Carolina. Raleigh had relatively little damage compared to the rest of the state. As an office, we only lost one day of work and still had web services during that time. So professionally, we fared very well.

Most of our SOS employees fared well also, but many have family in affected areas. "Affected areas" means virtually the entire state, as Hurricane Florence was 500 miles wide and slowly traversed from our east coast to the mountains in the west, with a southward swing through South Carolina but never leaving North Carolina. For me personally, all I have to do is some limb and leaf cleanup.

Damage is primarily due to fallen trees and floodwaters. At this point, we don't even know if all the trees that are going to fall have fallen, and we have many rivers that will not crest until several days from now as water flows east to the ocean.

As I write this, I-95 is closed (main north to south route in the eastern part of the state) and I-40 is closed (main route east-west) from Raleigh to Wilmington. Aerial photos show interstate highways that look like rivers. At some places, water across the interstates exceeds 6 feet deep. Unfortunately, given the amount of rain, it will take a long time before the roads are dry enough before an assessment of the damage to the roads themselves can be undertaken.

Currently, Wilmington, NC (population over 100,000), is only accessible by the port, and enough runway has been cleared for military planes to come into the airport. Delivery of food, fuel, medicine, and other necessities are a high priority. The state is frantically trying to clear a route for normal trucking and repair crews to get there. Even the pre-positioning of power repair trucks and other emergency assistance became less effective with each tree that fell or roadway that was submerged.

North Carolina can certainly use the world's prayers, as well as housing and financial assistance. The Governor has established a state-based fund with 100% of the proceeds going to direct assistance. That fund can be accessed at <https://governor.nc.gov/donate-florence-recovery>.

Please feel free to share this with anyone else who might be interested.

Sincerely,

Elaine F. Marshall

NC Secretary of State

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