



STATE OF NEW MEXICO
**Department of Homeland Security and
Emergency Management**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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**DHSEM and southern counties begin recovery from Memorial Day
flooding**

*In this '100-year storm,' parts of New Mexico received 5 to 7 inches of rain over the long
weekend*

Santa Fe, NM – On Wednesday, members of the Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHSEM) Recovery Team partnered with Lincoln County officials to perform preliminary assessments of flood damage in the Capitan, Glencoe, Picacho, and Hondo areas. These assessments are being conducted to support a possible State Emergency Declaration.

Lincoln County has also added a section to its website (lincolncountynm.gov) that directs regional Acequia associations to contact Gregory Suko from the DHSEM Recovery Team at Gregory.Suko@state.nm.us in order to schedule a damage assessment review. The county also encourages residents to contact their insurance companies regarding private property damage and Savannah Jones at (575) 258-1407 for issues with wells, septic tanks, and cesspools.

“The Hondo Valley received an unprecedented amount of rain in a short timeframe,” said **Lincoln County Emergency Manager Joe Kenmore**. “The subsequent flooding caused major damage to public roads and infrastructure, damage to private property and has unfortunately caused one resident to lose their life. Lincoln County emergency personnel and DHSEM have been assessing the damage and are working towards a disaster declaration. The Board of Lincoln County Commissioners will hold a special meeting Friday, June 4 at 2:00 PM to declare a disaster in the Hondo Valley.”

On Thursday, DHSEM Secretary Bianca Ortiz-Wertheim and DHSEM Recovery Team members toured the Roswell area together with the US Army Corps of Engineers, the Chavez County Flood Commission, Roswell Mayor Dennis Kintigh, and local officials to address a breached levee outside Roswell. The Corps of Engineers is working on methods to preserve existing infrastructure and mitigate sheet flooding, where flood waters move in broad sheets across flat land. Additionally, the American Red Cross has met with residents and is on site to assist with any needed services. Late yesterday, Governor Lujan Grisham

approved a DHSEM request for a Civil Air Patrol surveillance flight to document flood damages in the area and identify the possible origin of the flooding. For questions on flood prevention and local recovery tools, like sandbags, Chavez County residents can contact Karen Sanders at 575-624-6740 or k.sanders@roswell-nm.gov. For instructions on how to correctly fill and place sandbags, please visit: usace.contentdm.oclc.org.

“This was a 100-year storm,” said **Richard Smith, Superintendent of the Chavez County Flood Commission**. “The flood waters overpowered our dams and other infrastructure. Luckily, the flooding bypassed most of Roswell, but there was substantial damage to structures at the Roswell International Air Center. We can’t fully evaluate the damage to infrastructure until the water recedes.”

The Recovery Team will be back in Lincoln County next week to help identify and support Acequia applicants under the State Disaster Assistance Program.

“New Mexico is entering a season of extreme weather,” said **DHSEM Secretary Bianca Ortiz-Wertheim**. “Monsoon rains can lead to flash floods in a matter of minutes, and wildfires only increase the risk of flood damage because burned ground is often unable to absorb falling rain. We will continue to support our communities by coordinating resources, helping them recover from this on-going event, and building their resiliency. We are inspired by our communities coming together to help one another get through this.”

For more information on how New Mexicans can prepare for post-wildfire flooding, please visit afterwildirenm.org. Additionally, information on flood insurance through The National Flood Insurance Program is available at floodsmart.gov. While there is typically a 30-day waiting period for an NFIP insurance policy to go into effect, this wait can be waived in the event of flooding after a wildfire.



DHSEM officials examine flooding impacts on Alamo County Rd in Lincoln County



Flooding outside Roswell



Roswell Mayor Kintigh meets with DHSEM and USACE officials

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DHSEM works to protect the people of New Mexico and the nation through a comprehensive and coordinated program of mitigating hazards, preparing for emergencies, preventing attacks, and recovering from disasters.