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# Governor Chris Christie Announces \$28 Million in Mitigation Grants for Home Acquisition in Eight Flood-Ravaged Communities

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### Funding Advances Governor's Accelerated "Buy-Out" Program to Deliver Relief to Families and Strengthen Flood Readiness and Prevention Efforts

**Trenton, NJ** – Governor Chris Christie today announced that New Jersey will receive \$28 million in Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Hazard Mitigation Grant funding to acquire, or "buy-out" approximately 95 properties in flood-ravaged areas in the northern and central part of the state as a result of heavy rains from Hurricane Irene on August 27 to September 5, 2011. Eight communities will receive funding including six located in the Passaic River Basin, specifically in Essex, Morris and Passaic Counties as well as two communities in Middlesex and Somerset Counties in central New Jersey. Funding became available to the State under a Major Presidential Disaster Declaration for Hurricane Irene.

"At the outset, my Administration has been committed to aggressively pursuing a permanent solution to break the cycle of flooding, rebuilding, and additional flooding that prevents our communities and our residents from fully recovering from disasters like Irene," said Governor Christie. "Through the hard work of the state Department of Environmental Protection, Office of Emergency Management and our federal partners, we were able to accelerate a process that often can take up to two years for acquiring these damaged homes, giving these impacted families some peace of mind and a real new start."

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The effort is part of a 15-point plan developed by Governor Christie's Passaic River Basin Flood Advisory Commission to reduce flooding, minimize the impacts of floods, better prepare for the periodic flooding and improve efforts to help flood victims.

“Buying out flood-prone properties is a key component of the Commission’s realistic package of recommendations,” said Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner Bob Martin, who chaired the Flood Advisory Commission. “There are no silver bullets, but we’re starting to make tangible progress toward reducing and mitigating flood impacts on New Jersey residents and businesses.”

Earlier this year, Governor Christie announced the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s approval of the 2011 New Jersey State Hazard Mitigation Plan. The approval enables the State to continue its future eligibility to receive FEMA disaster and hazard mitigation assistance for the residents of the state through 2014. In September, DEP engaged an independent technical contractor to evaluate floodgate operations at the Pompton Lakes dam to ensure optimal function. Last month, the State awarded a \$350,000 grant to four towns in Morris and Passaic Counties for stream and river desnagging and debris removal, which improves the flow of water and helps alleviate future flood problems. DEP is looking for ways to streamline the permitting for towns to undertake these activities.

The communities included in this phase of property buyouts have experienced major flood events over a period of years. Seventy-five percent of the cost of the acquisitions is funded by FEMA with a 25 percent match for each project funded from DEP’s Blue Acres Program. The homeowner’s participation in an acquisition measure is voluntary.

The following flood mitigation projects have been approved:

- \$6,277,681 to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection for the acquisition of approximately 56 residences in Wayne Township, Passaic County (Total Estimated Project cost: \$8,370,241; the DEP Green Acres program will provide the non-federal share)
- \$4,134,889 to the Borough of Lincoln Park, Morris County for the acquisition of approximately 18 residences along the Pompton River (Total Estimated Project cost: \$ 5,513,186)
- \$3,848,204 to the Township of Pequannock, Morris County, for the acquisition of approximately 15 residences along the Pompton River (Total Estimated Project cost: \$5,130,938)
- \$3,149,867 to the Borough of Pompton Lakes, Passaic County, for the acquisition of approximately 13 residences along the Pompton River (Total Estimated Project cost: \$4,199,822)
- \$3,098,410 to the Township of Fairfield, Essex County, for the acquisition of approximately 12 residences along the Passaic River (Total Estimated Project cost: \$4,131,214)
- \$2,944,041 to the Township of Little Falls, Passaic County, for the acquisition of approximately 15 residences along the Passaic River (Total Estimated Project cost: \$3,925,388)
- \$2,888,909 to the Borough of Manville, Somerset County, for the acquisition of approximately 13 residences along the Millstone River (Total Estimated Project cost: \$3,851,879)
- \$1,929,615 to the Borough of Middlesex, Middlesex County, for the acquisition of approximately 7 residences along

the Raritan River (Total Estimated Project cost: \$2,572,820)

Floods have been and continue to be the most frequent, destructive, and costly natural hazard facing the State of New Jersey. The large majority of the State's damage reported for major disasters is associated with floods. For more information about reducing risk from floods, visit [www.ready.nj.gov](http://www.ready.nj.gov) or [www.floodsmart.gov](http://www.floodsmart.gov).

The Passaic River Basin Flood Advisory Commission delivered a report to Governor Christie in February 2011, and, at the Governor's direction, DEP has been aggressively implementing its recommendations. The 15-point plan can be found at <http://www.nj.gov/dep/passaicriver/docs/passaic-report201101.pdf>.

For more information on the Passaic River Basin Flood Advisory Commission, visit [www.nj.gov/dep/passaicriver](http://www.nj.gov/dep/passaicriver).

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