Florida Department of Transportation Approved for Additional $65.4 Million in Hurricane Michael Debris Removal Expenses

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PENSACOLA, Fla. — FEMA has approved $65,462,184 in grants to reimburse the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) for its costs for Hurricane Michael debris removal operations in four affected counties.

FDOT used contractors and, in some cases, inmate labor – as provided by an agreement with the state Department of Corrections – to remove, monitor, chip and dispose of storm debris that posed a serious threat to public health and safety in Calhoun, Gadsden, Gulf and Jackson counties. A total of 3,851,305 cubic yards of vegetative debris, 290,637 cubic yards of construction and demolition debris, 23,059 hazardous trees, 11,017 hazardous hanging limbs, 657 stumps and 136 major household appliances (white goods) were removed from public property, roads and rights of way between Nov. 25, 2018 and July 11, 2019.

This reimbursement brings the total of FEMA grants for FDOT's Hurricane Michael recovery to more than $388 million.

FEMA's Public Assistance program is an essential source of funding for communities recovering from a federally declared disaster or emergency. The Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM) works with FEMA during all phases of the program and reviews projects prior to FEMA final approval.

Applicants work directly with FEMA to develop projects and scopes of work. FEMA obligates funding for projects to FDEM after final approval.

Once a project is obligated, FDEM works closely with applicants to finalize grants and begin making payments. FDEM has procedures in place designed to ensure grant funding is provided to local communities as quickly as possible.

FEMA’s Public Assistance program provides grants to state, tribal and local governments, and certain private nonprofit organizations, including houses of worship, so communities can quickly respond to and recover from major disasters or emergencies.