

Carter County Awarded \$10.77 Million for Bridges Destroyed by Helene

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The State of Tennessee and FEMA have approved **\$10.77 million** for emergency measures and the restoration of two Carter County bridges that cross the Elk River in Elizabethton. Both were destroyed when Tropical Storm Helene swept across Eastern Tennessee in late September.

The two-lane bridges, both built in 1957, are each 230-foot-long and located about a mile apart along the winding Elk River. Known as the Poga Bridge, they were washed away by Helene's floodwaters and will be restored with funding from FEMA's Public Assistance program. The bridge replacement projects will follow best construction practices and meet applicable codes and standards.

FEMA's estimated share for each bridge replacement project is **\$3,504,046**; the nonfederal share for each project is estimated at **\$1,168,015**. Both Poga Bridges were also approved for an additional **\$1.07 million** from FEMA for emergency protective measures taken during the response to Helene. The nonfederal share for that Category B Public Assistance funding was estimated at **\$358,427**.

Cost estimates were generated using FEMA's Rapid Assessment with Public Infrastructure Data, which uses geospatial and aerial imagery as well as available Federal Highway Administration and State Department of Transportation data.

Because Public Assistance is a cost-sharing program, FEMA reimburses state applicants 75% of the eligible costs of repairs to existing structures. The federal share is paid directly to the state to disburse to agencies, local governments and certain private nonprofit organizations that incurred those costs. The remaining 25% represents nonfederal funds.

The Public Assistance program is FEMA's largest grant program, providing funding to help communities responding to and recovering from major presidentially declared disasters or emergencies. Tropical Storm Helene swept across Tennessee **Sept. 26-30**, and the president approved a major disaster declaration on **Oct. 2**.



FEMA

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