TO:

Honorable Dixy Lee Ray
Governor of Washington
State Capitol
Olympia, Washington 98504

As you requested, I have declared a major disaster for the State of Washington because of damage due to the volcanic eruption of Mount St. Helens beginning on May 18, 1979. I have authorized Federal relief and recovery assistance in the affected areas.

The Associate Director, Disaster Response and Recovery, Federal Emergency Management Agency, will coordinate Federal assistance efforts and designate specific areas of the State eligible for such assistance. The Federal Coordinating Officer will be Mr. Robert C. Stevens of the Federal Emergency Management Agency. He will consult with you and assist in the execution of the Federal-State Disaster Assistance Agreement governing the expenditure of Federal funds.

JIMMY CARTER
HU INFOMASTER

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PMS HONORABLE DIXY LEE RAY, DLR DON'T DWR

GOVERNOR OF WASHINGTON

STATE CAPITOL

OLYMPIA WASHINGTON 98504

AS YOU REQUESTED, I HAVE DECLARED A MAJOR DISASTER FOR THE
STATE OF WASHINGTON BECAUSE OF DAMAGE DUE TO THE VOLCANIC
ERUPTION OF MOUNT ST. HELENS BEGINNING ON MAY 18, 1979. I
HAVE AUTHORIZED FEDERAL RELIEF AND RECOVERY ASSISTANCE IN
THE AFFECTED AREAS.

THE ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, DISASTER RESPONSE AND RECOVERY,
FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY, WILL COORDINATE FEDERAL
ASSISTANCE EFFORTS AND DESIGNATE SPECIFIC AREAS OF THE
STATE ELIGIBLE FOR SUCH ASSISTANCE. THE FEDERAL COORDINATING
OFFICER WILL BE MR. ROBERT C. STEVENS OF THE FEDERAL
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY. HE WILL CONSULT WITH YOU
AND ASSIST IN THE EXECUTION OF THE FEDERAL-STATE DISASTER
ASSISTANCE AGREEMENT GOVERNING THE EXPENDITURE OF FEDERAL
FUNDS.

JIMMY CARTER

ACCEPTED

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1-PC
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON
May 21, 1980

Dear Mr. Macy:

I have determined that the damage in certain areas of the State of Washington resulting from the volcanic eruption of Mount St. Helens beginning on May 18, 1980, is of sufficient severity and magnitude to warrant a major-disaster declaration under Public Law 93-288. I therefore declare that such a major disaster exists in the State of Washington.

In order to provide Federal assistance, you are hereby authorized to allocate, from funds available for these purposes, such amounts as you find necessary for Federal disaster assistance and administrative expenses.

I expect regular reports on progress made in meeting the effects of this major disaster, the extent of Federal assistance already made available and a projection of additional assistance required, if any.

Sincerely,

Honorable John W. Macy, Jr.
Director
Federal Emergency Management Agency
Washington, D.C. 20472
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

May 21, 1980

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT
FROM: STU EIZENSTAT
LYNN DAFT
SUBJECT: Major Disaster Declaration for the State of Washington

In the attached letter, John Macy recommends that you grant a major disaster declaration for the State of Washington due to the volcanic eruption of Mount St. Helens.

We recommend that you approve this declaration.

For your information, we are assembling a team of noted scientists in various fields to assist FEMA in providing a central source of accurate, authoritative information. We will announce formation of this team at the same time we announce the disaster declaration.
DISASTER PRIORITY

SUBJECT

RECOMMENDATION TO THE PRESIDENT
FOR A MAJOR DISASTER DECLARATION
WASHINGTON

FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

DATE

MAY 20 1980
The President
The White House
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. President:

The major volcanic eruption of Mount St. Helens in the State of Washington, along with its attendant problems, has severely impacted the State and local governments. Governor Dixy Lee Ray has requested Federal assistance under Public Law 93-288. Governor Ray has declared a State of Emergency and has focused the efforts and resources of the State government on the problems caused by the volcanic activity. Seven people have died while about 95 are reported missing.

- The State and local governments have been strained by the diverse problems the eruption has generated.
- About 200 people have been evacuated from their homes. Approximately 4,000 travelers have been stranded.
- The ashfall and mudslide activity presents unique and difficult problems for the State's agricultural sector.
- The ashfall has stymied vehicular movement by both creating hazardous roadways and causing engine problems. The limited movement causes critical problems for emergency efforts.
- The mudslides have produced a myriad of problems for the State's water-related industries. There is limited access now in the Columbia River for shipping due to the clogging produced by the mud. Additionally, the increased water temperature is a crucial threat to hatcheries and the natural spawning system.
- Approximately 30 to 35 miles of Highway 504 (which included five bridges) have been destroyed. The damage is estimated presently at $150 million.
CONCLUSIONS:

- The severity and magnitude of the situation is beyond the capabilities of the State and local governments.

- The situation meets the requirements of a major disaster under Public Law 93-288.

- A major disaster declaration is warranted under PL 93-288 due to the impact on the State and local governments as a result of the volcanic activity on Mount St. Helens.

- The State commitment is not adequate for a disaster of this magnitude.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Governor's request be granted. (In the event of this declaration, I intend to designate the entire State of Washington for Individual Assistance and Public Assistance even though the State commitment is not adequate. I intend to instruct the Regional Director to require a significant commitment on the part of the State at the time the Federal-State Agreement is signed, including, but not limited to, assumption of 25 percent of Section 408 of PL 93-288, Individual Assistance, and the cost of the National Guard. In any event, the appropriations to your Disaster Relief Fund are virtually all obligated, and no obligation or disbursement for Public Assistance disaster aid is presently possible or is likely to be possible for at least several months.)

[Signature]
Director
Federal Emergency Management Agency

Date: May 20, 1980

Attachments:

- Declaration Letter
- Letter to the Governor
- Press Release
- Representation
- Map
- Governor's Request
WASHINGTON REPRESENTATION

The Governor of Washington is:

Dixy Lee Ray (D)

Washington Senators are:

Warren G. Magnuson (D)  
Henry M. Jackson (D)

Representing the Affected Areas:

Joel Pritchard (R)  1st District  
Al Swift (D)  2nd District  
Don Bonker (D)  3rd District  
Mike McCormack (D)  4th District  
Thomas S. Foley (D)  5th District  
Norman D. Dicks (D)  6th District  
Mike Lowry (D)  7th District

For further information, contact FEMA: (202) 634-4087.
May 20, 1980

The President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20560

Through:

Mr. Neale V. Chaney, Regional Director
Federal Emergency Management Agency
Disaster Response and Recovery
Region X
Federal Regional Center
Bothell, Washington 98011

Dear Mr. President:

On behalf of the citizens of the state of Washington, I request that you declare that a Major Disaster exists within the state of Washington under the provisions of the Disaster Relief Act of 1974, Public Law 93-288.

On March 20, 1980, noticeable seismic activity began on Mt. St. Helens, located in Skamania County. This activity has continued to the present time and is predicted to continue. The intensity of the seismic activity has ranged from 0 to 5.0 on the Richter scale.

On March 27, 1980, Mt. St. Helens erupted. It has continued to erupt and has been predicted to continue.

On March 31, April 2, May 18, 19, and 20 of 1980, Cowlitz, Skamania, Lewis, Spokane and Adams, and Yakima and Kittitas Counties, successively, proclaimed their counties in a state of emergency.

On April 3, 1980, I declared this entire state of Washington, pursuant to Washington State statutes, in a state of emergency, directed the execution of the state's emergency plan, and advised the director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Region X of this action.

On April 30, 1980, pursuant to this state's statutes, I ordered the closure of extremely hazardous and potentially hazardous areas on Mt. St. Helens from the public in order to protect life, health, and property.

On May 18-19, 1980, the following occurred as a result of major eruptions, earthquakes, and ashfall from Mt. St. Helens:

1. Six fatalities.

2. As many as 98 persons have been unaccounted for.
3. Over 6000 evacuees and stranded are being sheltered.

4. Reported ashfall accumulation within seventeen (17) counties has been between one-half (½) to eight (8) inches. Visibility as a result of this ashfall has been between 0 to 20 feet. (See Attachment A for list of counties affected).

5. The Toutle River Valley located in Cowlitz County has been flooded and flash warnings are in effect for areas within Lewis and Cowlitz Counties.

6. Mudflows and ashfall have caused the partial closure of three (3) interstates, eighteen (18) state routes, and numerous roads. (See Attachment B for list of counties affected).

7. All airports within Washington State except Walla Walla County and Sea-Tac International Airports, and Boeing Airfield are closed.


9. Vegetation in certain areas of Skamania and Cowlitz Counties has been completely devastated as a result of the ashfall.

10. Over 3000 acres within the Mt. St. Helens area has broken out in uncontrolled fires as a result of volcanic activity.

11. New vents have developed in the vicinity of the volcano, spewing out ash, steam, and gases.

12. Numerous traffic accidents statewide have resulted from mudflows and ashfall.

13. Limited transportation and visibility have made supplies of food, medical, and other essential necessities critical to the affected counties.

14. Mudslides and debris into the Columbia River has severely hampered shipping traffic.

All of the above stated events on May 18-19, 1980 continue. It is anticipated that the number of persons and counties affected will increase.

The State Department of Emergency Services has been in an increased readiness posture since the initial volcanic activity began. The State Emergency Operations Center is presently being maintained on a 24-hour basis to coordinate essential resources as a result of this volcanic activity.

Many affected counties are maintaining a 24-hour status at their Department of Emergency Services offices to evacuate persons, to man county emergency
operating centers, and to provide communications and other emergency actions.

The American Red Cross has set up and is setting up shelters for persons and are coordinating food, clothing, and other essential supplies.

The Washington State Department of Ecology is keeping a close watch on dams affected by log jams, flooding and mudflows, and is conducting water and air quality assessments.

The Washington State Division of Aeronautics has provided transportation assistance to emergency services personnel, and will provide light aircraft transportation for damage assessment once it is determined it is reasonably safe to enter into areas affected.

The Washington State Military Department is providing air and other transportation and communications support to nearly all counties affected.

The Washington State Department of Transportation will clear state and Federal Aid System roads and bridges to facilitate travel and emergency evacuation once it is reasonably safe for personnel to do so.

The disaster this state now faces is so extensive that assessments for damages to private, residential, commercial and public property, and for agricultural losses cannot be presented at this time. All emergency and available state and local personnel are totally involved in evacuation, sheltering, search and rescue missions, traffic control, and other essential emergency services. In addition, due to the unpredictability of the volcanic activity and the threat to life, assessment teams cannot be permitted into the affected areas.

All estimates for damage and information required by CFR §2205.41 will be provided as soon as state and local personnel can enter into the affected area and develop assessment reports.

I find that the above stated problems created by this disaster are beyond the capabilities of the state of Washington and the affected local governments. Therefore, on behalf of the citizens of the state of Washington, I respectfully request that a Major Disaster be declared to exist in the state of Washington under the provisions of the Disaster Relief Act of 1974, Public Law 93-288.

I request that the entire state of Washington be designated as the disaster area and be eligible for federal assistance under your declaration.

Also, I hereby request the following assistance be made available:

1. Assistance to individuals pursuant to Public Law 93-288.
   a. Unemployment assistance and reemployment services.
   b. Tax assistance.
   c. Consumer protection.
d. Legal assistance.

e. Emergency assistance to needy families program.

f. Emergency food stamp program.

g. Disaster crisis counseling program.

h. Temporary housing.

i. Small business loans to individuals.

j. Individual and Family Grant Program.

2. Assistance to business and agriculture.

a. Farmers Home Administration/Small Business Administration loans.

b. Agriculture Marketing Services.

c. Agriculture Stabilization and Conservation Service.

d. Cooperative Extension Service.

e. Federal Crop Insurance Corporation.

g. Livestock feed.

(1) Crash Feed Grain Donation Program.

(2) Hard Preservation Feed Grain Donation Program.

3. Assistance to state and local governments.

a. Authorize the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to assist in the repair and restoration of dikes or levees pursuant to Public Law 84-99.

b. Authorize the U.S. Department of Agriculture to restore damaged bank protection works and provide other stream bank restoration pursuant to Public Law 89-90.

c. Provide federal emergency funds for repair and reconstruction of federal roads and Federal Aid Highways.

d. Special assistance to schools pursuant to Public Law 81-874 and Public Law 81-815.

e. Assistance to public facilities authorized by Public Law 93-288.
(1) Emergency work
   (a) Debris and wreckage clearance.
   (b) Protective work.
   (c) Restoration of public facilities.
   (d) Public safety.
   (e) Emergency communications.

(2) Permanent restoration of damaged facilities.

4. Any other assistance that may be deemed appropriate.

I have determined, based upon the above information, that assistance under
the Disaster Relief Act of 1974, Public Law 93-288 without the declaration
of a Major Disaster and from other means will not be sufficient to meet the
disaster related necessary expenses or the serious needs of the untoll num-
ber of victims.

For the assistance grant program to individuals, I certify that the state
will implement an approved administrative plan. The grant program will be
made available throughout the major disaster area designated by you.

At this time, no appropriated funds are available for the state's share of
requested federal assistance. I will ask the legislature in the next regular
session for an appropriation of funds, and will repay this advance as soon
as funds become available.

Thank you for your prompt attention to and consideration of this request for
disaster assistance to benefit affected citizens of the state of Washington.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Dirt Lee Ray
Governor

Attachments
ATTACHMENT A

Seventeen counties affected by ashfall between one-half and eight inches and visibility from 0 to 20 feet.

Adams
Chelan
Cowlitz
Douglas
Ferry
Grant
Kittitas
Lewis
Lincoln
Okanogan
Pend Oreille
Pierce
Skamania
Spokane
Stevens
Whitman
Yakima
ATTACHMENT B

Counties where partial closures of federal, state, and local road systems occurred:

Adams
Benton
Cowlitz
Douglas
Grant
King
Kittitas
Klickitat
Lewis
Pierce
Spokane
Whitman
Yakima
OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY

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NOTICE TO THE PRESS

The President today declared a major disaster for the State of Washington as a result of the volcanic eruption of Mount St. Helens beginning on May 18, 1980, which caused extensive property damage. The President's action will permit the use of Federal funds in relief and recovery efforts in designated areas of the State.

Federal assistance from the President's Disaster Relief Fund will include individual and family grants as well as temporary housing assistance for eligible disaster victims. Low-interest disaster loans will be made available to disaster victims by the Small Business Administration and emergency loan assistance by the Farmers Home Administration. Federal funds also will be available for repair or restoration of damaged or destroyed public facilities.

Federal relief activities in Washington will be coordinated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Associate Director, William H. Wilcox, Disaster Response and Recovery, Federal Emergency Management Agency, will designate the specific areas within the State eligible for Federal assistance, based upon Federal and State damage assessments.

Mr. Robert C. Stevens of the Federal Emergency Management Agency will be designated as the Federal Coordinating Officer to work with the State in providing Federal disaster assistance under the Disaster Relief Act of 1974, Public Law 93-288.

The President also announced that a team of scientists is being formed to direct and coordinate the collection and dissemination of scientific information about the volcanic eruption and its effects on people and their environment.

The team, located in Vancouver, Washington will be directed by Dr. Robert Wesson, an internationally known geophysicist and an Assistant Director of the U.S. Geologic Survey. In addition to scientists at the Vancouver operations headquarters, Dr. Wesson will draw upon a network of advisors located principally in the Northwest.

NOTE: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FROM FEMA: (202) 634-6666.