



**Colorado Floods
September 2013
ESF #11 After Action Report (AAR)**



Incident Summary

Colorado experienced widespread flooding across the state as a result of heavy rains beginning September 11, 2013. The event is considered an historic sustained rainfall event that flooded multiple counties across the state. 5,958 people were evacuated and 8 fatalities were attributed to the disaster. ESF #11 was activated by FEMA Region VIII on September 13 and reported to the Regional Response Coordination Center, Interim Operating Facility, and eventually a Joint Field Office. ESF #11 coordinated with the State Department of Agriculture, ESF #11 partner agencies, FEMA, and EPA. ESF #11 communicated with Pet-Aid Colorado, the state NGO who managed significant animal sheltering operations. Several FSIS-regulated facilities experienced flood damage and/or closure due to access issues from severely damaged roads. DOI, with State cultural and historic partners, identified potential issues with cultural and historic properties. FNS implemented DSNAP while APHIS Wildlife Services coordinated wildlife issues with Colorado Parks and Wildlife.

Lessons Learned

Successful Area

1. Pet-Aid Colorado handled the widespread pet sheltering operations very successfully given the volume of evacuated pets and widespread nature of the operations. Up to 16 separate pet shelters were successfully operated across the state.
2. FNS quickly and efficiently stood up the DSNAP for several severely impacted counties.
3. APHIS Wildlife Services provided excellent desk officer support and technical expertise to coordinate and gather information on response activities with the Colorado Parks and Wildlife.
4. Having established relationships with all partners prior to the disaster was invaluable for gathering critical information in a timely manner and having a portable printer was invaluable as the FEMA networks were unavailable to ESFs.

Improvement Area

1. Confusion over FNS reporting information should be resolved to clarify POC reporting roles.
2. FEMA Region VIII RRCC is underground and wireless cell phone coverage was unreliable and often non-existent. Identifying and securing a dedicated landline for ESF #11 use in the RRCC is required. Additionally, having a functioning air card as a back-up to any available wireless or (sometimes) functioning mobile hotspots via Blackberry would be beneficial.