



**Tropical Storm Lee/Pennsylvania Flooding in FEMA Region III
September 8-9, 2011
Emergency Support Function 11 After Action Report**



Summary

On September 8, 2011, ESF11 was activated to the FEMA Region III, Regional Response Coordination Center in support of Pennsylvania flooding resulting from the remnants of Tropical Storm Lee. The large and slow moving Lee caused major flooding in the eastern portion of the state. The Susquehanna River rose to a record 42.6 feet in Wilkes-Barre that initiated mandatory evacuations of the area in fear of the levees being breached. The surge waters were also a major concern for northern Maryland, at Havre de Grace and Port Deposit, as additional flood gates had to be opened at the Conowingo Dam. The major ESF11 concerns were shelter support and damage to Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS) regulated facilities. State and NGO support to the shelters was exceptional. Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) authorized use of school lunch foods at shelters that were located in schools. Additional support for congregate feeding was not required. Damage to FSIS facilities was minimal. ESF11 was demobilized on September 9th.

What Went Well

- Coordination with ESF6 was exceptional. The Mass Care Cell provided up to date information on shelter populations throughout the event allowing ESF11 to keep FNS updated on the situation.
- FNS MARO provided current state warehouse inventories. State Distributing Agencies and FNS were standing by and prepared to support any requests for assistance.
- Coordination with FEMA logistics provided ESF11 and FNS with prepositioned infant/toddler kit numbers located at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, NJ as well as MREs, water and infant/toddler kits pre-positioned at Ft Indiantown Gap, PA.
- FNS MARO provided exceptional support to Pennsylvania when D-SNAP program was initiated.
- Pennsylvania SART was proactive and provided outstanding support to the Commonwealth. Close coordination provided ESF11 with accurate situational awareness
- FSIS offices in Philadelphia provided current damage assessments on regulated facilities and product loss information.
- Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture was activated at the State EOCs during the event. Continuous communication resulted in an accurate picture of what was occurring/developing within the Commonwealth.

Challenges/Areas for Improvement

- FEMA Region III attempted to Mission Assign the Farm Service Agency to 14 separate Disaster Recovery Centers (DRC) to field farm related questions. FSA is severely undermanned as they are currently in the field doing damage assessments. PA Department of Agriculture was contacted and identified that they had pulled their full-time staff employees out of the DRCs because of limited activity and replaced them with part-time employees that are not subject matter experts (SMEs). We attempted to offer reachback capabilities with a 24/7 contact but due to political pressure from the Governor's office, FEMA and PA Emergency Management Agency were insistent on having FSA representation on site. We were able to negotiate not processing a Mission Assignment and having one FSA representative sit in the Joint Field Office during normal duty hours and provide reachback capability on the weekend and after hours.