

# WRN Success Story: WFO Great Falls Supports the People of Montana through the Historic Flooding of 2011

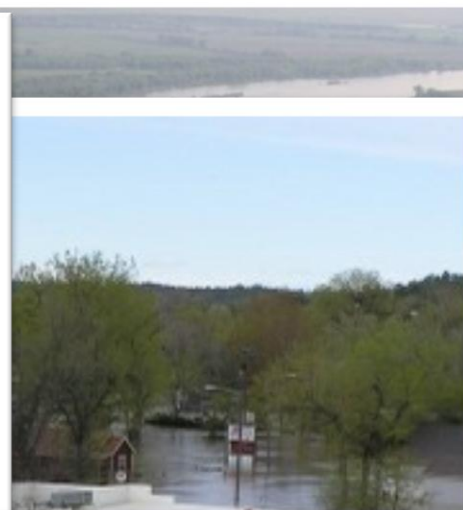
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Gina Loss  
Senior Service Hydrologist  
Great Falls Weather Forecast Office

93<sup>rd</sup> American Meteorological Society Annual Meeting  
First Symposium on Building a Weather-Ready Nation: Enhancing Our Nation's  
Readiness, Responsiveness, and Resilience to High Impact Weather Events  
January 10, 2013



201



# Beartooth Pass

## June 2011





# Impact Decision Support Services Provided by WFO Great Falls

Weather Story Internet Homepage Graphic

E-mailed Notifications for Partner Groups

Wide Audience GoToMeeting/Webinar

Specific User GoToMeeting/Webinar

Governor's Tour on Preparedness

State SECC/EOC Support

Individual Phone Support

In Person Briefings to Groups

County and Town Hall Meetings

Digital Billboard with Safety Message

Damage Assessments with DES and others

Flyer for Residents in Flood-threatened areas

FEMA R-VIII Briefings for Congressional Staffers, et. al.

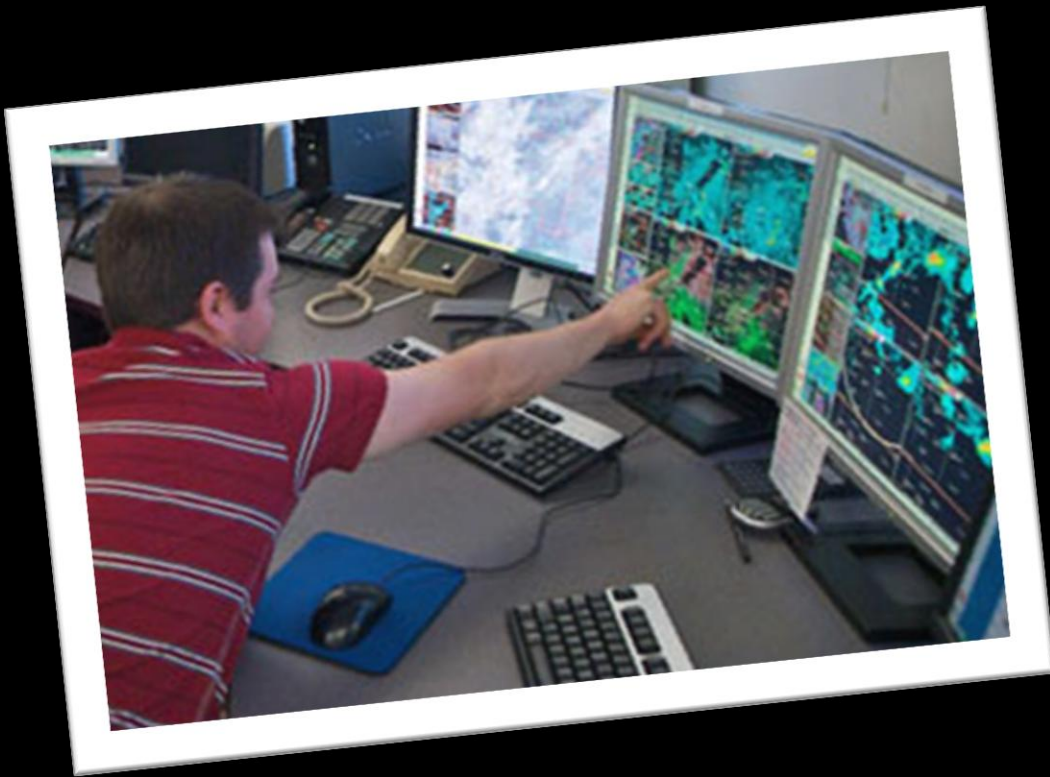
Weather Section for FEMA's request for Presidential Declaration

Weather Section for Governor's request for Presidential Declaration





# Assistance from Western Region Headquarters



- WRH provided an additional FTE for 7 days
- Duties included routine operations
- Allowed local staff to focus on more critical matters

# Governor's Tour on Preparedness

## Series of Town Hall Style Meetings

- Governor
- DNRC
- NWS
- MANG
- DES
- DOT



*"...is probably going to get worse before it gets better."*  
- Gov. Brian Schweitzer

# SECC Support Daily Briefings



- State Emergency Coordination Center
- Federal, state, county, and tribal officials in attendance
- Coordinated message from all MT WFOs
  - Current conditions
  - Warnings
  - Weather and flood forecasts
  - Expected impacts



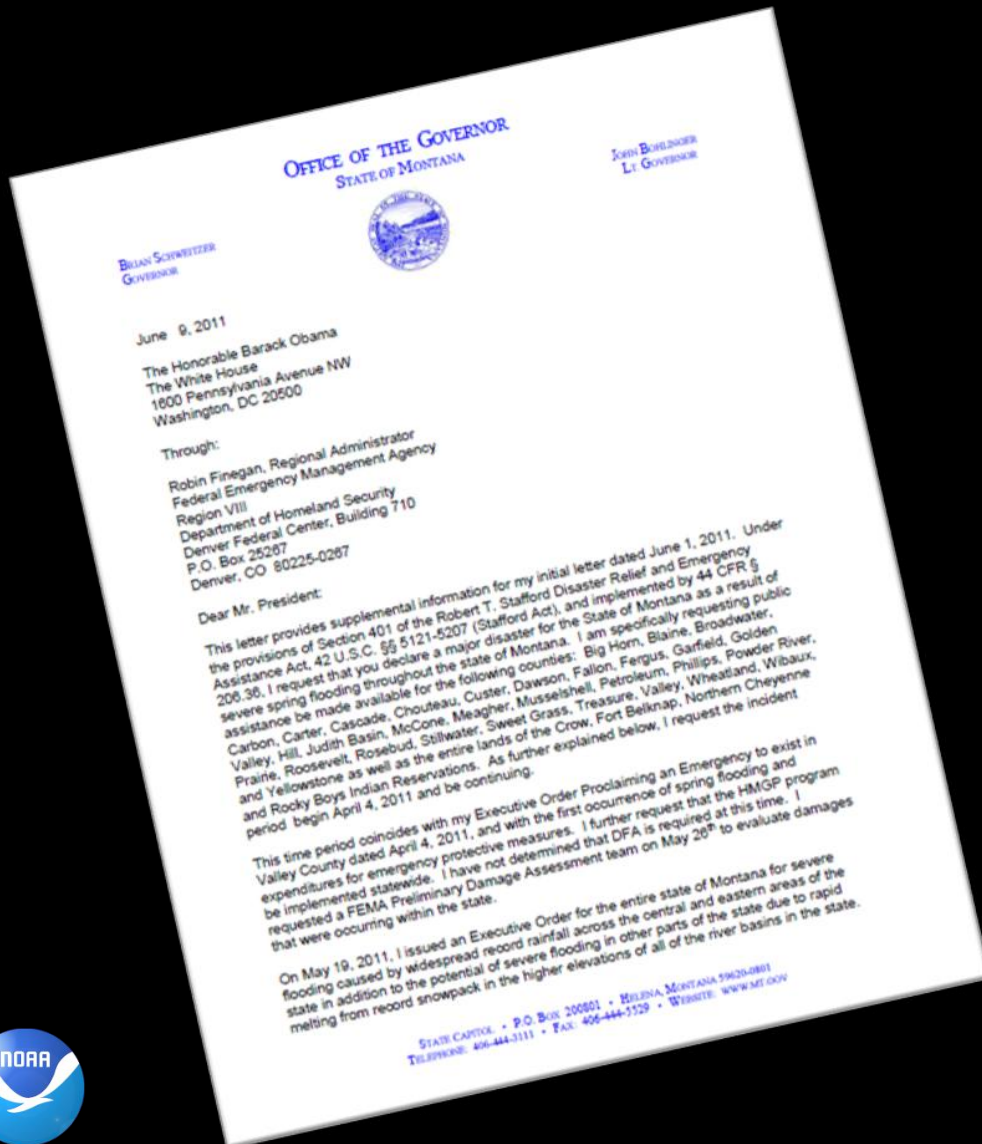
# SECC Support

## Electronic Billboard Messages



LAMAR

# SECC Support Governor Declaration



- Composed the weather/climate summary used by Governor Schweitzer in request for Presidential Declaration
- Done “on-the-fly”



# SECC Support FEMA Declaration

- Composed the weather/climate summary
- Critical to state gaining financial assistance
  - “It means the difference for the State of Montana getting the Presidential Declaration....”



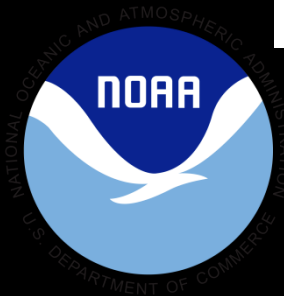


# Town Hall Meetings

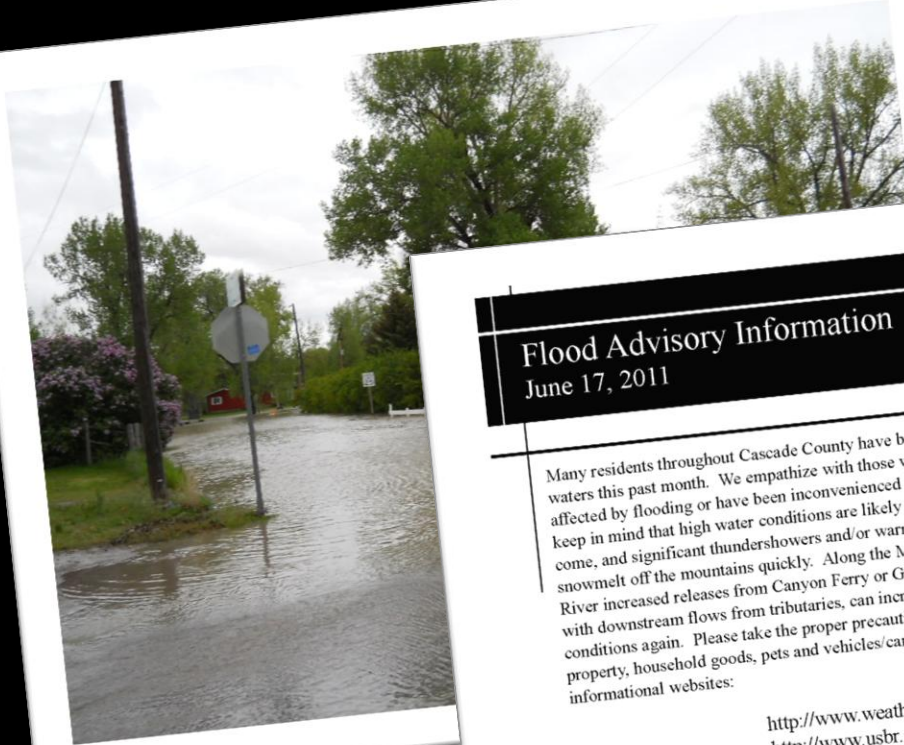
- Twin Bridges
- Chinook
- Sun River



# Frequent Briefings and Interviews



# Flood Assessments



*Sun River*

## Flood Advisory Information June 17, 2011



Many residents throughout Cascade County have been affected by flood waters this past month. We empathize with those who have been directly affected by flooding or have been inconvenienced by the high water. Please keep in mind that high water conditions are likely to persist for weeks to come, and significant thundershowers and/or warm temperatures can bring River increased releases from Canyon Ferry or Gibson Reservoir, together with downstream flows from tributaries, can increase water levels to flood conditions again. Please take the proper precautions to protect your family, property, household goods, pets and vehicles/campers by monitoring informational websites:

<http://www.weather.gov>  
<http://www.usbr.gov/gp>  
<http://www.nohrsc.nws.gov/nsa>  
<http://water.weather.gov>

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL: 454-6900



*Madison River*





An aerial photograph of a vast, snow-covered mountain range. The mountains are rugged and covered in deep snow, with some rocky outcrops visible. The sky is a clear, deep blue. The text "Thank You!" is overlaid in the center of the image.

# Thank You!

[weather.gov/greatfalls](http://weather.gov/greatfalls)  
[gina.loss@noaa.gov](mailto:gina.loss@noaa.gov)

2011/07/03