

At Governor Cuomo's request, President Obama has declared eight New York Counties a federal disaster zone.

The declaration is due to the damage caused by the flooding as a result of heavy rains left by Hurricane Irene. A Sunday storm that dumped more than 10 inches of rain on parts of the state.

The residents and businesses of Albany, Delaware, Dutchess, Essex, Greene, Schenectady, Schoharie, and Ulster Counties are now eligible for individual assistance – from food to financial assistance; individual counseling to legal services.

As part of the federal disaster declaration, 19 counties – including Schoharie County - are also eligible for funds to offset costs incurred for protective services and debris removal as a result of the hurricane.

“I thank President Obama for his quick action granting New York a federal disaster declaration,” Governor Cuomo said. “All levels of government are working together to help New York recover and we will not stop until the job is done.”

The watershed and mountainous topography in Schoharie County contributed to the devastation. As the storm moved north, runoff from Ulster and Green counties was already flowing into the area, filling the Schoharie Reservoir by the time the rain started falling here. The resulting floodwaters along Schoharie creek ripped through Blenheim, Fulton, Middleburgh, Esperance, Broome, Conesville, Central Bridge and Schoharie destroying buildings, and washing away roads. Hundreds have been without power for days.

For more disaster information, visit the FEMA website at www.disasterassistance.gov, or call 1-800-621-FEMA.