

California Department of Transportation

DIVISION OF BUDGETS
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January 16, 2026

Mr. Doug Hecox
Acting Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration, California Division
650 Capitol Mall, Suite 4-100
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Hecox:

As required under 23 CFR 668.111 (c), we request your consideration to approve Disaster CA25-8 August 2025 Gifford fire in San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara Counties as eligible under the Emergency Relief Program.

A Governor's Proclamation executed December 23, 2025, is included as part of the Disaster Survey Summary Report (DSSR), attached for your review.

The DSSR contains the latest list of identified damaged sites and their corresponding currently estimated repair costs. The preliminary damage estimate is in the range of \$6.6 million for State damages, and currently, no damages have been reported by the Local agencies, subject to increase. The estimated federal share of repair costs on eligible roadways will be required to exceed the \$700,000 threshold per 23 CFR 668.105(j) as indicated in the attached Damage Survey Summary Report.

As provided for in the FHWA Emergency Relief Manual, updated May 31, 2013, under Chapter III, Section A, Detailed Damage Inspections, the Detailed Damage Inspection Reports / Damage Assessment Forms (DDIR/DAF) "are completed at a later date, usually after the Division Administrator has made a finding of ER eligibility." FHWA's Acknowledgement letter dated December 15, 2025, for this disaster included that "all DAFs must be completed by March 13, 2026". Given the anticipated timeframe of a corresponding Finding of Eligibility and the necessary work to complete damage assessment, it is anticipated that additional time will be needed. Therefore, as part of this application the State of California formally requests the Damage Assessment Form due date be extended to April 30, 2026, in order to allow field staff to complete and submit DAFs to FHWA for approval.

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Upon finding that the above Disaster is eligible, an initial Program of Projects will be developed and submitted to FHWA within 3 months of the Finding of Eligibility letter, as outlined in 23 CFR 668.13(a). If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at (279) 234-2581 or by e-mail at <raul.lerma@dot.ca.gov >.

Sincerely,

RAUL LERMA, Chief
Program and Project Management Branch
Office of Federal Resources

Attachment

- Disaster Survey Summary Report (Disaster CA 25-8)

c: Peter Pangilinan, Senior Transportation Engineer, Project Delivery Districts 1
and 2 Federal Highway Administration
Andrew Bianchi, Transportation Engineer, Project Delivery, Federal Highway
Administration

bc: Aimee Kratovil, Acting Director, Project Delivery, Federal Highway Administration
Shawn Hart, Acting Chief, Office of Emergency Management and Infrastructure
Protection, Headquarters, Division of Maintenance, Caltrans
Mike McCracken, Senior Transportation Engineer, Headquarters, Division of
Maintenance, Caltrans
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