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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**\*PHOTO RELEASE\***  
**Gov. Scott: Our Focus is Getting Keys Residents Back Home**



**KEY WEST, Fla.** – Today, Governor Rick Scott, and several state agency heads, held meetings in the Florida Keys focused on how to assist Monroe County to quickly open the Keys to residents. Hurricane Irma made landfall on Cudjoe Key as a Category 4 storm on Sunday. Governor Scott toured damage in the Keys on Monday and Wednesday. The decision on when it's safe for residents to return is made by Monroe County, but the Governor has committed full support of the state to help expedite that process. Local officials have indicated that a decision regarding residents returning will be made soon.

Governor Rick Scott said, "Florida is 100 percent focused on helping Monroe County get their residents home quickly and safely. This requires everyone working together and communicating around the clock. We are aggressively directing state resources to the Florida Keys. The power must get back on and the sewage system must be quickly fixed to ensure there are no health and safety issues. Residents of the Florida Keys need to be able to return to their normal lives."

The Governor was joined by the Secretary of the Department of Environmental Protection, the Secretary of the Florida Department of Transportation, the State Surgeon General, the Director of the Division of Emergency Management, and the Executive Director of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. The Governor was also joined by members of FEMA, the Florida Highway Patrol, and the U.S. Navy.

## **STATE RESOURCES CURRENTLY BEING DIRECTED TO THE FLORIDA KEYS**

### **FWC**

- FWC has 155 officers and 34 vessels in Monroe County including Special Operations Group (SOG) officers. These officers are working with National Guard Members and an Urban Search and Rescue team to continue rescue operations in the Keys.

### **Florida National Guard**

- The Florida National Guard is actively coordinating a multi-service effort to conduct life-saving operations in the Florida Keys. Guard Soldiers and Airmen are providing critical capabilities including road and runway clearance to support the delivery of critically needed supplies.
- The Florida National Guard also established a Logistical Staging Area in Marathon with 76 National Guard members to distribute supplies to six points of distribution in Monroe County to ensure supplies, such as food and water, are quickly provided to those who need them.
- Florida Army National Guard has staged assets in Opalocka, where they are actively conducting aerial operations to deliver life-saving supplies to the Florida Keys.
- The Florida National Guard is currently operating two Command Post Nodes and two Joint Incident Site Communications Capability systems which support satellite communications systems to provide desperately needed communication capabilities in the Florida Keys. The Guard is working closely with Monroe County to identify any additional needs.

### **Florida Department of Transportation**

- FDOT damage assessment teams and debris removal crews are assessing damage and cleared U.S. 1 down to Key West. FDOT has also completed bridge inspection on 26 off-system bridges at the request of Monroe County.
- FDOT is closely coordinating support of debris removal in off-system roads in Monroe County. Crews are out now in Big Pine Key and working their way into other locations as directed by the county.
- FDOT worked with ATT to install temporary towers so those with ATT phones should have normal connectivity.
- Current damage repairs include:
  - Mile Marker 74.5 - Sea Oates Beach temp work was complete yesterday by 3 PM. Permanent pavement was finished Thursday.
  - Mile Marker 37 (four-lane divided section) - Embankment work was finished Thursday. Permanent pavement repairs will be completed Friday.
  - Inspection of all shoulder failures was completed Thursday. Work will be scheduled beginning next week.
  - Traffic signal repairs will begin Friday and signage repairs and installation will begin next week.

### **Florida Highway Patrol**

- FHP is providing traffic escorts to resources in route to the Keys, such as fuel tankers, food and water deliveries, mobile restrooms, and seven AT&T communication trucks to assist with communication coverage in Monroe County.

- FHP has a squad of troopers assigned to Key West to assist with any local law enforcement needs.

### **Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE)**

- FDLE is coordinating repairs to the state law enforcement radio system and establishing temporary communications for first responders in Monroe County.
- FDLE has coordinated dozens of law enforcement missions for Monroe County including local EOC staffing and security.

### **Florida Department of Environmental Protection**

- At the state's request, EPA issued a No Action Assurance to allow emergency and backup electric generating units in Monroe County to operate without meeting all pollution controls in order to facilitate the supply of needed electricity during and after Irma.
- DEP staff requested an Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) for 10 crews to assist the 117-mile main line repairs need from Key Largo to Key West. Currently, Tennessee and South Carolina are working to deploy teams this morning, to be escorted by law enforcement once in Florida. One team from the City of Jupiter was on the ground yesterday to assist the Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority in laying pipeline and assessing breaches. To further supplement work until additional teams arrive, Miami-Dade water and sewer department has assembled two teams to start work.

### **Additional Resources**

- The Following resources are mobilizing to be deployed to Monroe County: baby supply kits for 1,000 babies and food and water to support more than 100 first responders.
- The following resources are in route to Monroe County: 3 trailers of ice, food and water, 2 trailers of ice, 7 truckloads of ice and 1 truckload of food, and 40 industrial portable restrooms.
- The following resources have been delivered/supplied to Monroe County: 100,000 Dehydrated Meals to Salvation Army Warehouse, 36,000 bottles of water and 100 individual portable restrooms that have been placed along every mile marker along US1.

### **Utilities**

- Monroe County utility providers:
  - Keys Electric (lower keys - South end of Seven Mile Bridge to Key West)
    - 31,183 accounts
    - 80% of all accounts are still without power
  - Keys Electric Cooperative (upper keys)
    - 32,500 accounts
    - 28% of all accounts are still without power

### **FEMA**

- As of September 12, 2017, FEMA transferred approximately 3.8 million meals and 3.4 million liters of water to states in the Southeast, at the states' requests.
- Current resources available to Florida include: more than 315,000 meals, more than 390,000 liters of water, and 150 generators

## **LOCAL UPDATES IN THE FLORIDA KEYS**

### **The Port of Key West**

- Remains closed to all boat traffic until the U.S. Coast Guard has determined that all areas surrounding the port are safe. Submerged vessels are still blocking the main channel and the U.S. Coast Guard has determined that the area surrounding the port is unsafe.
- The U.S. Coast Guard is patrolling the area and is preventing any boats from entering the restricted area.

### **Food and Water Distribution**

- Six distribution centers are established in Monroe County to ensure supplies, such as food and water, are able to be quickly provided to those who need them. Distribution sites will be open daily from noon until 6:00 p.m.
- The Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority has opened their storage tanks for water distribution.

### **Boil Water Order**

- A Boil Water Notice is still in effect across the Keys.

### **Medical Services**

- Mariners Hospital in Tavernier has opened its emergency room.
- A medical care center has been established at Marathon City Hall with the support of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

### **Grocery Stores**

- The Winn-Dixie and Publix grocery stores are open in Key Largo with limited hours.
- The CVS Pharmacy in Key Largo opened Wednesday.

### **Fuel**

- Monroe County has reported that fuel remains limited in the Keys but gas stations are beginning to open up to the public, especially in the Upper Keys. The Marlin at MM 88, the Valero at MM 92 and the Circle K at MM 102 were open this morning.

### **Insurance**

- Citizens Property Insurance Corporation has opened a Catastrophe Response Center at the Murray Nelson Government Center in Key Largo. Policy holders can file claims, confirm coverage and receive advance payments for additional living expenses when appropriate. For more information, click [HERE](#).

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