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SUBJECT: Disaster Assistance Available for Residents and Businesses

BY: Pakou Ly, Public Information Coordinator

Disaster Assistance Available for Residents and Businesses

[Duluth, MN] – Disaster Assistance is available to victims of the Northland Flash Flood thanks to the leadership of Governor Mark Dayton, the Minnesota Legislature and community members. Today, Mayor Don Ness, Senator Roger Reinert, and Drew Digby with the Northland Flash Flood Long Term Recovery Committee along with program representatives held a news conference to thank the Governor and Legislature for their quick work to approve a \$168 million disaster assistance package and also highlight the types of flood assistance that is accessible to homeowners and businesses.

“We are grateful for the leadership of the Governor and the Legislature who saw and heard the needs of the Northland and responded overwhelmingly with a strong package. Now it’s time for residents to take action and get the help they need to get on the road to recovery,” said Mayor Don Ness.

“I’m pleased that both bodies of the Legislature worked expeditiously to approve assistance to those most severely impacted by the June storms—public infrastructure, private property owners, nonprofits, and our parks and trails system. This is a huge relief to those of us living in the Northland. As a community we have worked hard, but having the state as a committed partner in our efforts will help us recover sooner,” said Senator Roger Reinert.

- The **Small Business Administration** set up a Disaster Loan Outreach Center at the Duluth Entertainment Convention Center, among other locations, to offer low interest loans up to \$200,000 to homeowners for repair or replacement of damaged or destroyed real estate. Homeowners and renters are eligible for loans up to \$40,000 to repair or replace damaged or destroyed personal property. Businesses or non-profits may be eligible for up to \$2 million for recovery and replacement of equipment, real estate and other business assets. SBA representatives are on hand to provide assistance. The Center will be closing after Wednesday but applications are being taken on line through October 15 at www.sba.gov If SBA assistance is insufficient or unavailable, homeowners can then apply for a Quick Start loan.
- The **Quick Start** loan has no-interest, no-payment and is forgiven after 10 years of remaining in the home. Applicants can receive up to \$30,000 to address damages and fix their homes. The loan does not apply to “personal property” like washers and dryers furniture. Quick Start loans are being administered for Duluth residents by One Roof Housing, 218-727-5372. For those

outside of the city limits, Quick Start loans are being administered by the Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency, 218-749-2912. Because flood victims must first apply for the SBA loan before they can receive Quick Start funds; applications are being taken now for both programs. The Quick Start Disaster Recovery Program received \$12.2 million in funding through the special legislative session last Friday.

- To aid area nonprofits, the bill includes \$250,000 for a **capacity building grant** program to help local nonprofits with organizational support such as case management services, construction management and volunteer coordination in support of the recovery efforts.
- Businesses adversely affected from the June floods are eligible to apply for loans through the Department of Employment and Economic Development's **Minnesota Investment Fund**. \$15 million has been appropriated in the bill to cover expenses such as reparation of buildings, leasehold improvements, fixtures and equipment, loss of inventory and cleanup costs.
- Local parks and trails will receive approximately \$12 million for repairs for public park facilities as well as debris and sediment removal for city and county parks.
- The **Twin Ports Region Long Term Flood Relief Fund** will address the long-term recovery needs of those affected by the flood in our region. The Fund will help people address unmet needs after all other means of support have been exhausted. Fundraising for this fund is ongoing. Every dollar donated to this fund is being designated to go to victims across the region.
- **Disaster Case Managers** will be available in the next couple of days to help provide one-on-one customer assistance to victims of the Northland Flash Flood navigate the network of flood relief programs.
- The City of Duluth is also offering low interest Home Energy loans for any utility customer who needs to replace furnaces or water heaters due to flood damage.
- The Duluth Public Utilities Commission recently passed a resolution to suspend the fixed fees for water, gas, and sanitary sewer for those residents whose homes were deemed uninhabitable after the flood. This abatement lasts until the condemnation is lifted. Residents can call Comfort Systems 730-4050 to inquire about both programs.

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