



Governor's Office of Storm Recovery

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF STORM RECOVERY BEGINS \$600,000 PROJECT TO UPGRADE EMERGENCY SHELTER IN TOWN OF JAY

Project Will Increase Resiliency of Important Community Facility, Which Sheltered 40 Residents for More Than Two Weeks Following Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee

(February 26, 2020) - The Governor's Office of Storm Recovery today began a \$600,000 project to strengthen the town of Jay Community Center— which critically sheltered 40 residents for more than two weeks following Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee. Through the Emergency Shelter Upgrades Project, on-site restrooms and showers will be made ADA-compliant, an existing residential-grade kitchen will be converted into a commercial kitchen to better accommodate large numbers of meals, and the backup boiler will be replaced. The project, which will support the center's future use as a safe and reliable emergency shelter, is being implemented in partnership with Essex County.

"As we continue to prepare New York for the modern-day realities of increasingly frequent storms, rising seas and climate change, we cannot underestimate the significant role that local facilities play in post-disaster response," **said Alana Agosto, Executive Director of the Community Reconstruction and Infrastructure Programs for Governor's Office of Storm Recovery.** "The Jay Community Center is a shining example of this, having opened its doors to several dozen New Yorkers by Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee. We are pleased to start work on this potentially life-saving NY Rising Community Reconstruction project, which will enhance the overall resiliency and preparedness of this community."

Located at the confluence of the east and west branches of the Ausable River, the town of Jay experienced devastating flooding during Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee. Many properties in the 100-year and 500-year floodplains were inundated with water, sediment and debris, and roads became impassable.

This project comes on top of the \$2.5 million Rome Dam Project also funded by GOSR, which successfully removed a structurally unsound 38-foot-wide high hazard dam from a bedrock gorge on the West Branch of the Ausable River— thereby mitigating risk of failure. In concert, these strategies enhance the overall resiliency of the community and reduce flooding events.

"Essex County is very pleased and thankful for the grant of \$600,000 from the Governor's Office of Storm Recovery toward upgrading the Town of Jay's Community Center as a resilient community shelter for any future catastrophic events," **said Chair of the Essex County Board of Supervisors Shaun Gilliland.** "The Town of Jay lies in the Au Sable River Valley and is subject to unusually high and more frequent flooding events, particularly the destructive flooding of Hurricane Irene in 2011. These upgrades will far toward protecting this community when faced with severe vulnerability."

"We are fortunate to be working with a great group of professionals who are all dedicated to the renovations and updates to the Town of Jay Community Center Emergency Shelter," **said Town of Jay Supervisor Archie Depo.** "I look forward to its continued progress and eventual completion. We are extremely grateful to the Governor's Office of Storm Recovery for the generous funding that is making

this project a reality. We look forward to the next phase of this funding and the upcoming East Branch Restoration Project.”

“I am very pleased to see that the Emergency Shelter in the Town of Jay is receiving this much-needed funding,” **said Assemblymember Dan Stec.** “Providing an accessible and safe environment for all of our residents during a storm or other types of emergencies is extremely important and will ensure the wellbeing of many North Country residents.”

“I am proud to represent a region known for its resiliency and being a place where neighbor helps neighbor,” **said Senator Betty Little.** “But as we’ve seen, we are prone to devastating weather requiring a robust, well-coordinated effort to keep people safe. You can’t prepare for a crisis in the midst of one and that’s why I am very pleased to see this state funding being made available to help the Town of Jay and Essex County upgrade this emergency shelter so they may be as well prepared as possible.”

Altogether, more than 650 New Yorkers served on 66 NY Rising Community Reconstruction Planning Committees across the state, and have together proposed hundreds of projects inspired by the unique needs and assets of their regions. Collectively, NYRCR committees have held 650 planning meetings and 250 large-scale public engagement events as they have worked to rebuild more sustainable communities, reinforce infrastructure, mitigate the risks of loss and damage associated with future disasters, and spur revitalization. Now in the implementation stage, GOSR works with a variety of municipal, county and non-profit partners to bring locally-devised proposals to fruition.

Established in June 2013, GOSR coordinates statewide recovery efforts for Superstorm Sandy, Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee. Through its NY Rising Housing Recovery, Small Business, Community Reconstruction, Infrastructure and Rebuild by Design programs, GOSR invests \$4.5 billion in federal Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery funding to better prepare New York for extreme weather events. More information about GOSR and its programs is available online at <http://stormrecovery.ny.gov/>.

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