



For Immediate Release

**GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF STORM RECOVERY ANNOUNCES \$950,000
INVESTMENT IN JOHNSON CITY STORMWATER MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

The project aims to improve flood protection for the village, located in Broome County

New York, NY (November 12, 2014) – The Governor's Office of Storm Recovery (GOSR) today announced a \$950,000 project that aims to repair damaged infrastructure and improve stormwater management for the Village of Johnson City.

The project, which was developed by the Broome NY Rising Community Reconstruction (NYRCR) Planning Committee, seeks to address erosion caused by Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee.

The effort will replace a damaged concrete-encased sewer main, which if compromised, could release untreated effluent into the creek– and ultimately– into the Finch Hollow Stormwater Retention Facility 1. The initiative will also rehabilitate approximately 3,500 feet of drainage ditch to eliminate erosion at 50 residential properties and increase holding capacity of the retention facility. The drainage ditch is located to the east of and parallel to Anna Maria Drive.

“The Anna Maria Drive Ditch Stormwater Management Project will serve to mitigate risks to the Village of Johnson City, while demonstrating the tremendous promise of proposals generated through the Community Reconstruction Program,” said Governor Andrew M. Cuomo. “When we first developed the program, we did so with the belief that locally-oriented strategies are our best path toward a more resilient future. We are seeing the process work in a great and effective way.”

As an incorporated village within the Town of Union, Johnson City is located just west of Binghamton and north of the Susquehanna River. In 2011, back-to-back storms Lee and Irene caused severe damage to the region, contributing to widespread flooding of the Susquehanna, which runs through three states and measures 464-miles-long.

With Lee delivering the hardest punch, Broome County was saturated with 12 inches of rain during what has been identified as the worst flood in the history of the Southern Tier. The river crested up to four feet higher than the previous record, and for the first time, overtopped levees and floodwalls. Numerous roads were impassible or entirely washed out, stormwater and sewer utility systems were overloaded, damaging pump systems or causing total failure.

In total, Irene and Lee destroyed 229 homes, damaged more than 9,000 homes and caused approximately \$502.8 million in property damage in Broome County. The NYS Office of Emergency Services estimates that 24,000 people were evacuated from the region, with 2,000 individuals receiving temporary shelter for up to 15 days.

Over an eight-month period following the storms, Broome County was one of 50 communities (representing more than 100 localities) to participate in the State's \$650 million NYRCR Program. Managed by GOSR, NYRCR is a grassroots planning and implementation process that strives to empower storm-impacted communities to rebuild, while becoming stronger and more resilient.

Altogether, more than 500 participants serve on NYRCR Committees throughout the State, having proposed approximately 600 projects with an aggregate cost of more than \$800 million. Each participating community was allocated between \$3 million and \$25 million to implement eligible projects that incorporate and capitalize on local needs, strengths, and challenges. This past summer, New York State launched "Round 2" of the program, extending the opportunity to 16 new communities.

"The Anna Maria Drive Ditch Stormwater Management Project is not only an important step forward for the Village of Johnson City, but also for our Community Reconstruction Program as a whole," said Executive Director of Storm Recovery, Jamie Rubin. "As we move toward implementation, we know it will be especially gratifying to see the project come to fruition. It is just the beginning of many more to come."

"Having seen the water damage done by the stream that borders the properties on Anna Maria Drive, it is clear to me that this project deserves top priority in Johnson City's project improvement list," said Broome County Executive, Debbie Preston. "We thank the Governor and the State for providing funding for this very important priority and I certainly hope the Village pursues completion of this project as quickly as possible using the Community Rising funds."

"Participating in the Community Reconstruction Program has been a great opportunity for Johnson City," said Village of Johnson City Mayor Greg Deemie. "However, seeing this project move forward toward completion is a great achievement for all of those involved. This will help the area of our community impacted by this project to be better prepared for years to come."

In order to carry out the stormwater management project, New York State has executed a Subrecipient Agreement (SRA) with the Village of Johnson City. The project will work to stabilize the drainage structure to reduce risk of localized flooding to downstream residents and businesses, as well as decrease stormwater runoff, protect riverine ecosystems and limit contributing to flood waters.

"As this project moves forward, it serves to exemplify the outstanding potential and results of the grassroots Community Reconstruction Program," said Gail Domin, Co-Chair of the NY Rising Community Reconstruction Committee. "Through the bottom-up process, we have banded together as a community and worked collaboratively to produce a more resilient future for the Village of Johnson City, Broome County and the Southern Tier. We couldn't be more thrilled."

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, and Infrastructure programs, GOSR invests more than \$4 billion made available through the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development's (HUD) CDBG-DR Program to better prepare New York for future extreme weather events.

For more information go to www.stormrecovery.ny.gov.

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