



## *State of Wyoming Military Department Office of the Adjutant General*

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**WyMD-10-54**

## **Emergency responders thankful for Wyoming Guard presence**

By Tech Sgt. Leisa Grant and Capt. Tim Lockwood  
Wyoming National Guard

LANDER, Wyo. – Civilian support and assistance is the name of the game when it comes to deploying the Joint Task Force Cowboy. For the past two years, the command and control module of the Wyoming Military Department has been exercising various scenarios in preparation for activation.

Now, the time has come to demonstrate what it has been practicing. On Tuesday, the Governor of Wyoming authorized the state activation of members of the Wyoming Air and Army National Guard to assist the residents of Fremont County in flood water mitigation. In total, about 230 guard members are on hand in Fremont County to assist the local authorities.

Those that have responded include the Joint Task Force Cowboy and the Wyoming Quick Reaction Force, both of which are composed of members of the Wyoming Air and Army National Guard. The flood response also included members of the Wyoming Army National Guard's 2-300th Field Artillery and the 960th Brigade Support Battalion, and the Wyoming Air National Guard's 153rd Airlift Wing.

The members have worked jointly to assist local first responders, community members and other state agencies to provide filling and placement of sandbags, safety patrols, assistance with evacuation, and other flood mitigation efforts.

For Army National Guard Col. Luke Reiner, commander of the Joint Task Force Cowboy, the mission has been a success so far.

“Things are going fantastic,” he said. “Everything is falling into place. It’s refreshing and rewarding to see all our training and planning successfully helping out the people of Wyoming.”

He said the integration with the civilian authorities, which the guard is here to support and assist, has been pretty seamless.

“We are up and running and meeting their needs,” Reiner said.

The incident commander for Operation Fremont County Flood 2010 is Craig Haslam. He agreed with Reiner’s sentiments.

“If the Guard had not been here to assist us, the county emergency personnel and residents would have been taxed beyond their abilities,” he said. “The leadership of the Guard is taking good care of our community.”

Haslam said another key aspect of the Guard response is it has allowed the emergency personnel and local volunteers to get some much needed rest.

For Pfc. Dominik Dubravec of the Army National Guard’s 960th Brigade Support Battalion, the flood has hit close to home, as he a resident of Lander, and currently attends college in Fremont County.

Dubravec was in the midst of annual training at Camp Guernsey when the Guard received the state activation orders. His activation returned him to the county to help where he can.

“I know a lot of people in the area,” he said. “I am worried about the people who are near the river.”

Dubravec knows the Guard is providing some much needed assistance as the river has significantly swollen since he left for annual training.

Sergeant Jeff Quillen, a Fremont County deputy sheriff for 29 years, said having the Guard personnel in Fremont County has taken the burden off of the local emergency services.

The National Guard has been like a “second arm” for the city of Lander, Quillen said. “The cooperation has been outstanding,”

He said, both Air and Army Guard personnel have assisted local law enforcement agencies with everything from helping with night patrol and regular police calls to securing areas for public safety, which has been a great help.

Kit Kinder, with the Volunteer Riverton Fire Department, said he is very appreciative of the crews that have been sent to assist Fremont County. He has been working with Wyoming Guard members at the sandbag facility in Riverton.

“It has been going great. The Guard has been excellent to work with,” he said. “We are just thankful to have the hands here to help us.”

Kinder said it’s a good sight to see the local volunteers and Guard members working side-by-side for the protection of the communities.

Red Cross’s state operations director, Spencer Pollock, has been focused on preparing facilities in both Riverton and Lander in case of possible large scale evacuations.

“So far, so good,” he said. “The multi-agency coordination has been great.”

Pollock said they are ready and prepared to handle up to 250 people the first hour of a large evacuation and will be able to handle whatever influx comes after that.

It’s true no one wants the floodwaters to be here, but the one positive outcome of all individuals involved is that between the local community, emergency personnel and the Wyoming National Guard, a strong system of mitigation and support is in place.

assist with various emergency activities for the Fremont County Flood 2010 operation.

(Photo by Tech. Sgt. Leisa Grant, 153rd Airlift Wing public affairs specialist)

100611-F-9736G-002: Wyoming National Guard Airmen work together to fill sandbags in an effort to assist Fremont County residents with protecting their homes and properties June 11.

The state of Wyoming activated more than 200 National Guardsmen, more than 70 of whom are members of the 153rd Airlift Wing, to assist with various emergency activities for the

Fremont County Flood 2010 operation. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Leisa Grant, 153rd Airlift Wing public affairs specialist)