



Emergency Preparedness and Response

PROBLEM

- Our State experienced several devastating fires this year, several of which impacted Tribes, leading to a major disaster declaration.
 - Disaster declaration dates did not reflect accurate dates for when Tribes were impacted by fires.
 - It was not clear what resources were available or could be requested due to the disaster declaration.
 - Emergency declarations without clarity around resource availability is not helpful.
- Communication and coordination with Tribes around response and available resources was not timely.

NEED

- Better communication and coordination between Tribal governments and the Governor is needed during emergencies and in between emergencies.
 - The Governor needs to prioritize channels of Government-to-Government communication with Tribes and be willing to meet Tribal leaders sovereign-to-sovereign when Tribes are being impacted by an emergency.

SOLUTIONS

- Tribes need dedicated funding for Emergency Preparedness and Response activities. Federal funding that comes as a pass through from DOH is not sufficient to maintain a single emergency preparedness staff person.
- During active emergencies regular meetings between the Governor and impacted Tribes, such as occurred during the pandemic, may help ensure communication and coordination is prioritized.

BENEFITS

- Clearer communication channels between government leaders will lead to faster sharing of information and resources among impacted Washington citizens.
- Dedicated Tribal funding for emergency preparedness and response will lead to a more robust emergency management system for the entire state.