

Title: **State begins work on recovery from Hurricane Matthew**
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State begins work on recovery from Hurricane Matthew

Rivers still at flood stage,
 some roads still closed

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Two weeks after Hurricane Matthew made landfall as it brushed by the South Carolina coast, recovery work is starting.

The storm's effects are still evident in some areas: The Waccamaw River remains in major flood stage, swamping dozens of homes and businesses near Conway, after setting a record crest of 17.9 feet earlier this week. The river is not forecast to dip below major flood stage until next week.

The Little Pee Dee River is in major flood at Galivants Ferry but is dropping fast.

The power is back on, downed trees and other debris are being swiftly removed and money and supplies are being collected for rebuilding and recovery across South Carolina.

The transportation department said Friday that 68 roads and 16 bridges are still closed because of the storm.

Damage

If the floods of 2015 are any indication, it could be months before any statewide damage numbers are announced. Gov. Nikki Haley, an accountant before going into politics, does not like releasing any preliminary figures.

"In my own experience and observation, I know that throwing out numbers is very dangerous because the numbers could go up and the numbers could go down," she said Monday at

her most recent news conference on the disaster.

The massive floods of 2015, which covered a wider area of the state, without the coastal wind damage that happened with Matthew, caused about \$2 billion in damage, according to the South Carolina Emergency Management Division.

Some places have already made their assessments. Florence County had 59 homes and 32 businesses destroyed, 133 homes that suffered major damage and about 2,100 with minor damage, costing about \$52 million, according to the county Emergency Management Division.

Recovery

Federal aid is available in 21 of South Carolina's 46 counties and more may be coming.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency is offering help to nearly all counties to the south and east of Columbia.

The governor is also beginning another round of fundraising for the One SC Fund, which fixed 1,500 homes and provided \$2 million in addition to the federal aid received after the 2015 floods.

Power

At the storm's height in South Carolina on Oct. 8, about 850,000 customers were without power. Early this week,

the lights had been turned back on for nearly everyone.

The South Carolina Electric Cooperatives — a network of smaller utilities across the state — fixed 300,000 outages. That was double the outages from the 2014 ice storm and about 33,000 more customers without power than from Hurricane Hugo in 1989, spokesman Mark Quinn said.

For Duke Energy, Hurricane Matthew marked the fifth-largest number of outages the utility has ever dealt with in South Carolina and North Carolina. Only ice storms in 2002 and 2005 and Hurricanes Hugo and Fran caused more people to lose their electricity.

Beaches

The beaches in southern South Carolina took the biggest hit from Matthew.

Hilton Head Island put on hold a nourishment project pumping sand back onto 8 miles of its beaches as Hurricane Matthew approached. The storm took some of the new sand away, but city officials say they think they can still finish the project by the end of the year, a delay of only a few weeks.

The state parks at Hunting Island and Edisto Beach both suffered significant damage and won't reopen until at least early next year. Both islands suffered significant storm surge: Sand covered the oceanfront road on Edisto up to near the bottom of the speed limit signs.