



Statement by
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission Chairman Neil Chatterjee and
North American Electric Reliability Corporation
President and Chief Executive Officer Gerry Cauley
on Electricity Industry Assistance to Hurricane Irma Recovery
September 12, 2017

WASHINGTON, D.C. – We appreciate and encourage the ongoing inter-utility cooperation among utilities, both public and private, in response to Hurricane Irma, which devastated Florida and Georgia, neighboring states, Puerto Rico and U.S. territories in the Caribbean. This storm comes on the heels of Hurricane Harvey, which already put the electricity industry to the test.

The Hurricane Irma response likely will be among the largest industry restoration efforts in U.S. history. Utility industry vegetation and line crews have traveled to the region in large numbers from across the country and Canada.

Nevertheless, affected utilities in the southeastern United States report that, in many areas, they still urgently need vegetation management and line crews to expedite restoration and recovery of electricity to customers. We encourage cooperation of the industry in providing assistance to areas affected by Hurricane Irma.

NERC vegetation management requirements under Reliability Standard FAC-003-4 – Vegetation Management provide flexibility in how utilities manage their programs and is not prescriptive with regard to specific milestones or dates. The requirements generally contemplate the possibility of modifications to a utility's annual work plan to respond to conditions such as identified unanticipated high priority work and crew or contractor availability due in part to mutual assistance agreements for helping after events such as hurricanes.

Using our regulatory discretion, we will consider the actions of entities assisting others from the impacts of Hurricane Irma to be positive and to not negatively impact compliance considerations with respect to Reliability Standard FAC-003-4 Vegetation Management.

Mutual assistance and public-private cooperation are hallmarks of the electric industry, and we appreciate the efforts underway to assist the areas affected by Hurricanes Harvey and Irma. We particularly want to express our gratitude to the thousands of crews who have traveled, in many cases over long distances, to help restore electric service to customers in those areas.