



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**For additional information contact:**

C. Scott Cooper, Director of Engagement & Communication  
scooper@bushfoundation.org  
651.245.9039

**CHEYENNE RIVER SIOUX TRIBE CONFRONTS DEVASTATING WINTER STORM**  
**Bush Foundation Offers \$50,000 to Match Contributions for Emergency Relief**

---

**(Saint Paul, MN – February 1, 2010)**—The Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe has declared a state of emergency after a severe ice storm cut electricity and water across the reservation in north central South Dakota. Ongoing frigid conditions hinder recovery from this disaster and raise the potential for loss of life. The situation is complicated by the reservation’s remote nature, spreading over more than 2.7 million acres.

The 9,000 tribal members as well as non-Indians living on the reservation are in immediate need of emergency heating (oil, propane, kerosene heaters and fuel, generators and batteries), as well as food and water.

Tribal Chairman Joseph Brings Plenty said, “I know there are hard economic times across the country and those who are able continue to respond with prayers, money and muscle to help our neighbors in Haiti. I find myself in the humble position of appealing for your support in our time of emergency. I would not ask you for assistance unless I was confident we are doing all we can. We are.”

The Bush Foundation has provided two grants of \$25,000 to match contributions made for emergency relief through [Native Americans in Philanthropy](#) or the [South Dakota Community Foundation](#). Funds will be used to assist reservation families with immediate needs such as food, water, relocation and heating fuel, with 100 percent of donated funds reaching the Tribe, thanks to support from GiveMN.org to cover transaction fees.

Bush Foundation President Peter C. Hutchinson said, “One part of the Bush Foundation’s legacy is that it has responded when extreme natural disaster has threatened communities we serve, including support in 1997 when the Red River of North Dakota flooded and in 2001 to restore buildings in Granite Falls, MN, after a tornado. We believe the extraordinary nature of this natural disaster warrants a similar reaction from the Foundation. We invite the people of the region and our philanthropic colleagues to join us in supporting the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe as they secure the well-being of their people.”

The situation, in summary:

- As many as 1,500 to 2,000 homes on the reservation are without heat and water; neither is expected to be restored for several weeks.
- In addition to the 9,000 tribal members affected by the storm, the Tribe is also assisting its non-Indian neighbors living on the reservation.
- Families with the means to relocate are temporarily seeking refuge off the reservation as the Tribe anticipates more families will seek to relocate but with seasonal unemployment above 70 percent, they will face the challenge of limited financial resources to acquire food, shelter and supplies off the reservation.

- People with medical needs have been relocated to Rapid City and the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation.
- Many homes have been damaged by freezing temperatures or have been broken into as people search for needed supplies.

(Read the Chairman's [complete report](#) on the storm's damages and the Tribe's needs.)

*The **Bush Foundation** was established in 1953 by 3M executive Archibald Bush and his wife Edyth. The Foundation strives to be a catalyst to shape vibrant communities in Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota, and in the 23 Native nations that share the same geography, by investing in courageous and effective leadership that significantly strengthens and improves the well-being of people in these three states.*

*Since 2008, the Bush Foundation has been pursuing its Goals for a Decade—to develop courageous leaders and engage entire communities in solving problems, to support the self-determination of Native nations and to increase educational achievement. (For more information about Goals for a Decade, visit [www.bushfoundation.org](http://www.bushfoundation.org).)*

###