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CITIZENS RALLY TO SUPPORT CHEYENNE RIVER SIOUX DISASTER RECOVERY
Cold Severely Damages Homes and Hampers Repair Efforts

(Saint Paul, MN – February 12, 2010)—In an inspiring collaborative effort, individuals, tribes and foundations have donated hundreds of thousands of dollars toward the immediate and ongoing recovery of the [Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe](#). A devastating ice storm on Jan. 21 and continuing extreme weather had left the reservation's more than 15,000 Native and non-Indian residents without heat, water and electricity. While conditions on the reservation have improved, the immediate and long-term challenges persist, as does the need for additional and continued support. (See a [situation update](#).)

Cheyenne River Sioux Tribal Chairman Joseph Brings Plenty said, "The support that we've received and the amount of funds raised for the relief efforts here are overwhelming. We've received so much support out there, so many individuals coming together and basically giving their hearts. Some people were able to give more and some people were able to give what they had. Any amount is greatly appreciated and will go directly to the individuals who are in need."

Individuals have donated **more than \$280,000 since early February**, when the [Bush Foundation](#) and [Northwest Area Foundation](#) announced matching grants totaling \$70,000 for contributions made through [Native Americans in Philanthropy](#) (NAP) and the [South Dakota Community Foundation](#) (SDCF). In reaction to the Bush Foundation match, [Running Strong for American Indian Youth](#) announced its own match of \$12,500 to contributions through [SDCF](#).

In addition, GiveMN.org is covering the credit card transaction fees of contributions made through [NAP](#) so that 100 percent of those dollars reach the Tribe.

Help in the form of money and donated supplies and services, as well as shelter, has been ongoing from Native nations located across America. Financial contributions include a \$100,000 commitment from the [Yoche Dehe Wintun Nation](#) located in the Capay Valley near Sacramento, CA, and \$25,000 from the [Shakopee-Mdewakanton Sioux Community](#) of Minnesota.

Bush Foundation President Peter C. Hutchinson said, "This is a wonderful and generous reaction from our community, from tribes and individuals across the country, and from our philanthropic partners. More work remains to help the people of the Cheyenne River Sioux recover and rebuild, and the coming months will see continued hardship. Long after the media attention and the sense of crisis fade, the need will remain. I hope people will continue to give generously."

Both giving sites continue to receive donations; all participants in this collaborative effort strongly encourage citizens to contribute through the [NAP](#) or [SDCF](#) site as the Tribe's need will continue into the spring as it addresses long-term issues beyond food and water. Chairman Brings Plenty advised that these contributions will "go toward two parallel situations: addressing the housing situation and improving our shelter infrastructure." The Tribe had only four

generators for use in shelters. The recovery plan includes 14 shelter sites spread across the reservation, each hard-wired for a generator and stocked with supplies.

(See a [situation update](#).)

*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.)

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Situation Update

According to Cheyenne River Sioux Chairman Joseph Brings Plenty Jr., some conditions on the reservation have improved:

- Power has been restored to 95 percent of homes, and the delivery of safe drinking water and propane fuel has mostly resumed.
- Residents who sought refuge off the reservation for safety or medical reasons have returned.
- The reservation's only health clinic has resumed providing dialysis and other medical services; the flu that had affected many reservation families after the storm has abated.

The following immediate and long-term challenges persist:

- The restoration of power and safe water to some reservation residents is weeks away. The Tribe continues to deliver generator fuel, food, firewood, water and other supplies to families whose living conditions are still tenuous.
- Damage to homes is severe—broken water pipes that led to flooding, propane heaters that failed and need repair or replacement, etc. With ice saturating the floors of many homes, repair may not begin until the spring thaw, which is still months away.
- Night-time temperatures hover in the single digits and hamper recovery efforts. The Chairman reported a wind chill factor of -35° F in the past week; in the days after the storm, the wind chill had dropped as low as -45° F.
- The Tribe continues to operate its single shelter in Eagle Butte for elders and other residents of the reservation in need.
- Federal Emergency Management Agency has conducted an assessment of the damage but no outcome is known.
- Some tribal members have been working continuous 16-hour days since the Jan. 21 storm to meet the basic needs of the Tribe and are nearing exhaustion.
- Winter food reserves have spoiled with the long-term power outages; most food transferred to outdoor storage was lost to theft or wildlife.