

Pursuant to President Biden's Executive Order, FEMA Designates Jim McPherson to Serve as Federal Disaster Recovery Coordinator

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CHICAGO – On Sept. 20, President Biden issued an Executive Order directing FEMA to designate a Federal Disaster Recovery Coordinator to oversee the long-term recovery efforts in the communities affected by Norfolk Southern’s train derailment in East Palestine, Ohio.

Pursuant to the President’s Executive Order, FEMA is designating Federal Disaster Recovery Coordinator Jim McPherson to conduct a comprehensive assessment of any unmet needs that are not addressed by Norfolk Southern and would qualify for Federal assistance. Coordinator McPherson will also collaborate with Federal, State and local governments, the private sector and voluntary, faith-based and community organizations supporting the recovery. These efforts will complement the Biden-Harris Administration’s ongoing, whole-of-government response effort in the aftermath of the train derailment.

McPherson comes with a skillset that is applicable to the localized, complex nature of the East Palestine response, and he will support the community in meeting its long-term recovery goals. This appointment will enhance FEMA’s already close coordination with our local, state and federal partners in East Palestine following the Norfolk Southern train derailment.

“In the aftermath of Norfolk Southern’s train derailment, FEMA worked closely with state, local, and federal partners to support the people of East Palestine and the state of Ohio,” said FEMA Region 5 Administrator Tom Sivak. “President Biden’s Executive Order affirms the Administration’s ongoing and steadfast commitment to supporting impacted communities, and Coordinator McPherson will help ensure successful recovery efforts over the long-term.”



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Following the February train wreck in East Palestine, the entire Biden-Harris Administration mobilized a robust, multi-agency effort to support the people of East Palestine and other affected communities. FEMA provided technical and operational assistance to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), interagency partners, and the Ohio Emergency Management Agency. At peak, FEMA had 70 staff members on the ground in East Palestine to support the effort.

For more information on the entire federal family's response to the Norfolk Southern Train derailment, see [here](#).

The federal family remains committed to supporting the people in these affected communities and the state of Ohio to recover fully from this incident.

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FEMA's mission is helping people before, during, and after disasters.

