

Cocke County Awarded \$7.89 Million to Replace Conway Bridge

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The State of Tennessee and FEMA have approved **\$7.89 million** to replace Cocke County's Conway Bridge, which crosses the Nolichucky River and was destroyed when floodwaters from Tropical Storm Helene swept across Eastern Tennessee in late September.

Funding from FEMA's Public Assistance program covers eligible costs to replace the **414 foot-long** concrete bridge built in 1924, using best construction practices and codes and standards set by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials.

FEMA's share for this project is **\$5,919,427**; the nonfederal share is **\$1,973,142**.

Federal funding for the one-lane bridge is based on estimates from FEMA's Rapid Assessment of Public Infrastructure Data. That process uses geospatial and aerial imagery as well as assessor information to develop an estimated cost for public infrastructure that was destroyed or damaged in a disaster. The final scope of work will reflect the reconciled actual costs and capture any additional changes.

Because Public Assistance is a cost-sharing program, FEMA reimburses state applicants 75% of the eligible costs of repairs to existing structures. The federal share is paid directly to the state to disburse to agencies, local governments and certain private nonprofit organizations that incurred those costs. The remaining 25% represents nonfederal funds.

The Public Assistance program is FEMA's largest grant program, providing funding to help communities responding to and recovering from major presidentially declared disasters or emergencies. Tropical Storm Helene swept across Tennessee **Sept. 26-30** and the president approved a major disaster declaration on **Oct. 2**, allowing FEMA to pay for disaster-damaged infrastructure.

