



TEXAS GENERAL LAND OFFICE
GEORGE P. BUSH, COMMISSIONER

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PRESS RELEASE

Bastrop County leaders and Texas GLO cut ribbon on new communications tower

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In May, Texas General Land Office (GLO) Commissioner George P. Bush announced the Community Development & Revitalization (CDR) program reallocated \$200,000 from the state administration budget to be used for essential infrastructure projects and assist Bastrop County as it works to recover from the 2011 wildfires. Among the infrastructure projects selected for funding was a 450-foot radio emergency communications tower. Today Texas Representative John Cyrier (District 17), Bastrop County Judge Paul Pape, and Bastrop County Commissioner Clara Beckett (Pct. 2) joined GLO Director of Coastal Protection, Ken Wisian, and members of the CDR team to celebrate the completion of this project with a ribbon cutting ceremony.

Commissioner Bush recognizes the importance of preventative infrastructure improvements and reallocated funding within the CDR budget to address these critical needs in Bastrop County. He said, "The Texas General Land Office's Community Development & Revitalization program plays a vital role in helping communities affected by disasters with long-term recovery. The 2011 wildfire season devastated Central Texas, particularly Bastrop County. I am proud to work with my friend, Rep. Cyrier, to prioritize these projects and reallocate funds in order to implement these valuable infrastructure improvements. Whether it is floods, fires, or other disasters, the GLO will continue to work with local leaders across Texas on rebuilding efforts to help restore a sense of comfort and community spirit."

"The people of Bastrop know all too well that, when disaster strikes, communication is critical," said Rep. John Cyrier. "Working with Commissioner Bush and his team, we were able to identify, prioritize and address critical communications needs for our community. I am proud to represent the people of House District 17, and will continue to work in collaboration with the GLO to ensure we have the necessary infrastructure in the event of a crisis."

During the 2011 Bastrop County Complex Fire, effective emergency radio communications were hindered due to the lack of aerial coverage in the eastern portion of the county and the lack of sufficient system channels to handle the overload of radio traffic and outdated radio equipment. In order to provide efficient county wide radio

communications, the county proposed and then constructed a 450 ft tall Motorola tower and installed updated equipment on three additional towers within the county.

In addition to the radio emergency communications tower, Bastrop County used the funds granted by the GLO to purchase and install a concrete climate controlled weather proof equipment shelter, LED hazard lighting system, backup electrical generation and storage equipment, signal transmission equipment and installation assistance. The infrastructure improvements are estimated to benefit more than 55,000 local residents, of which more than half qualify as low-to-moderate income.

The 2011 wildfire season was one of the worst in recent memory. In total, 3.9 million acres and approximately 5,900 structures were damaged or destroyed from November 15, 2010, through October 31, 2011. Bastrop County specifically experienced the most destructive fire with a final count of 34,457 acres burned and 3,017 homes destroyed or severely damaged. Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery funds are invaluable in the recovery of communities affected by disasters and serve to close the gap of unmet needs. Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery funds are an invaluable GLO administered resource, assisting Texans and our impacted communities to recover from the devastating impact of disasters and serve to close the gap between that assistance provided by Texas Division of Emergency Management, Federal Emergency Management Agency, the U.S. Small Business Administration, insurance and additional unmet needs.

About GLO Community Development & Revitalization

The Community Development & Revitalization program of the Texas General Land Office administers Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Texas was allocated \$3.1 billion for hurricanes Ike and Dolly and \$36.3 million as a result of the 2011 wildfires.

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