



Emergency Response to April 27 & 28 Tornado in Washington and Smyth Counties

May 18, 2011

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Bristol District Administrator

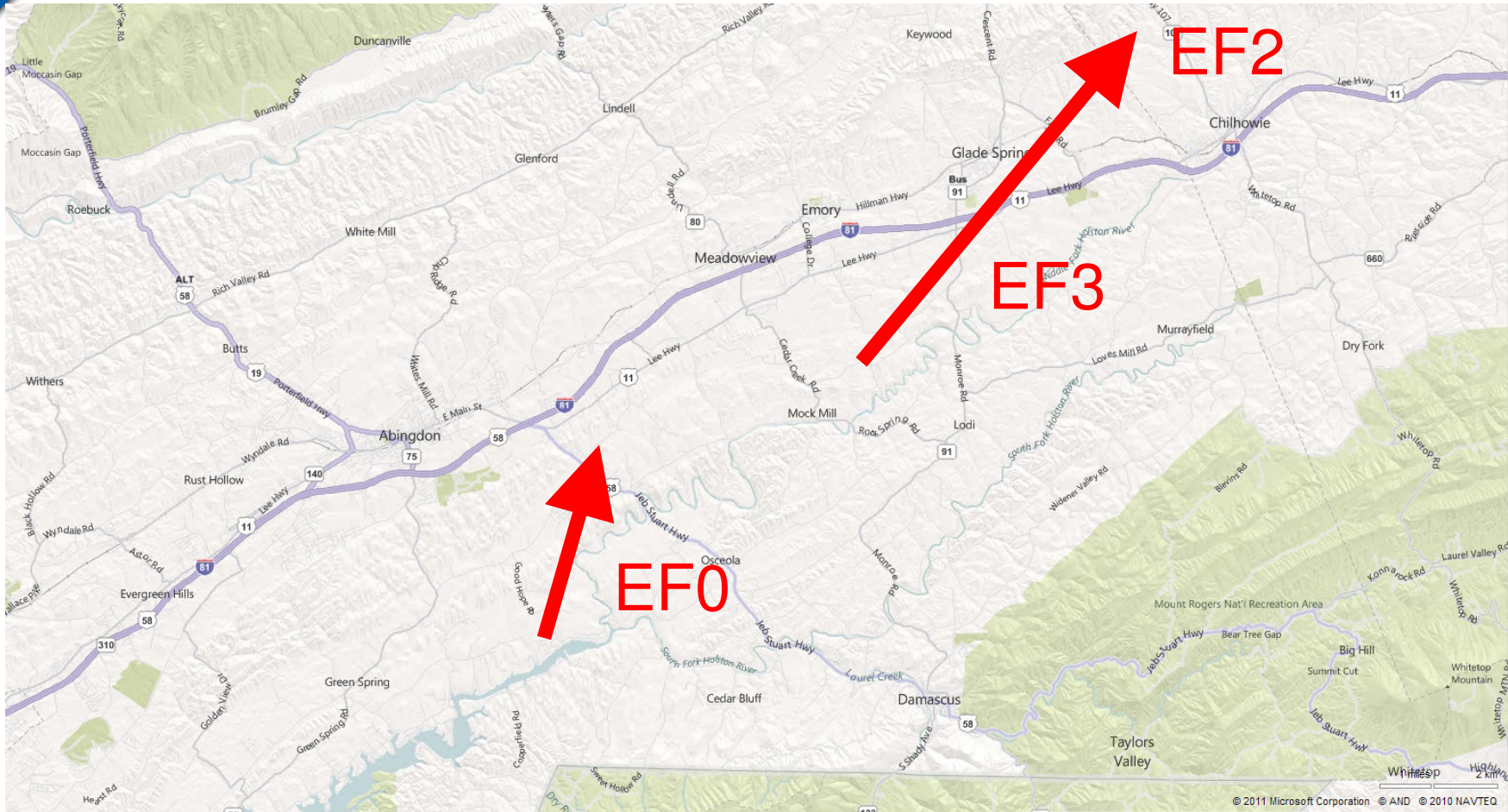
Washington and Smyth

Severe Weather Struck the Following Areas between 9:30 p.m. and 1:30 a.m. on April 27, and April 28:

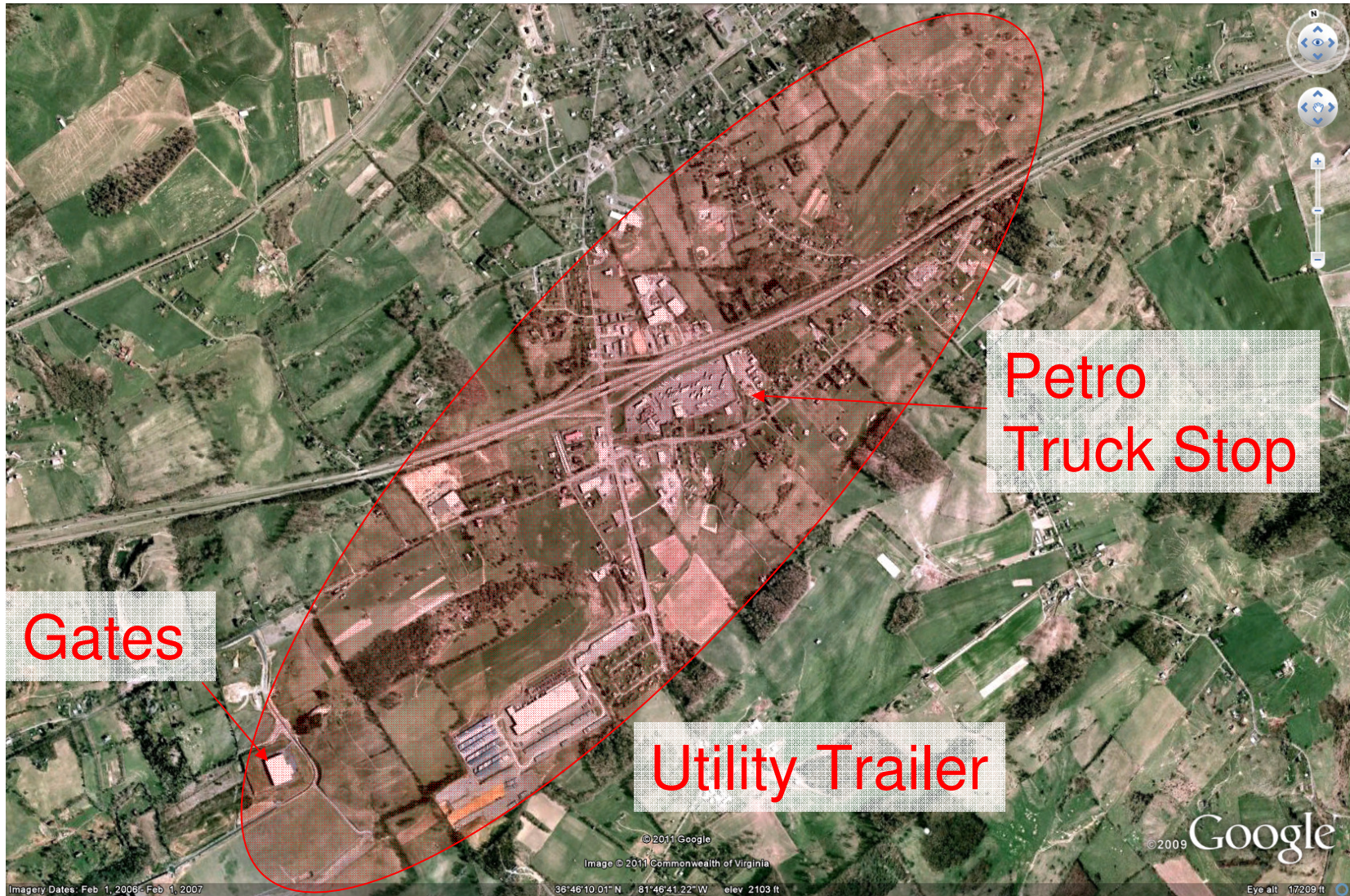
- **Southern Washington County and Town of Abingdon (EF0 Tornado, on enhanced Fujita scale, with estimated winds of 65-85 mph)**
- **Glade Spring in Washington County (EF3 Tornado, winds of 136-165 mph)**
- **Chilhowie in Smyth County (EF2 Tornado, winds of 111-135 mph)**
- **Five other tornadoes ranging from EF1 to EF3 hit neighboring counties in Tennessee.**



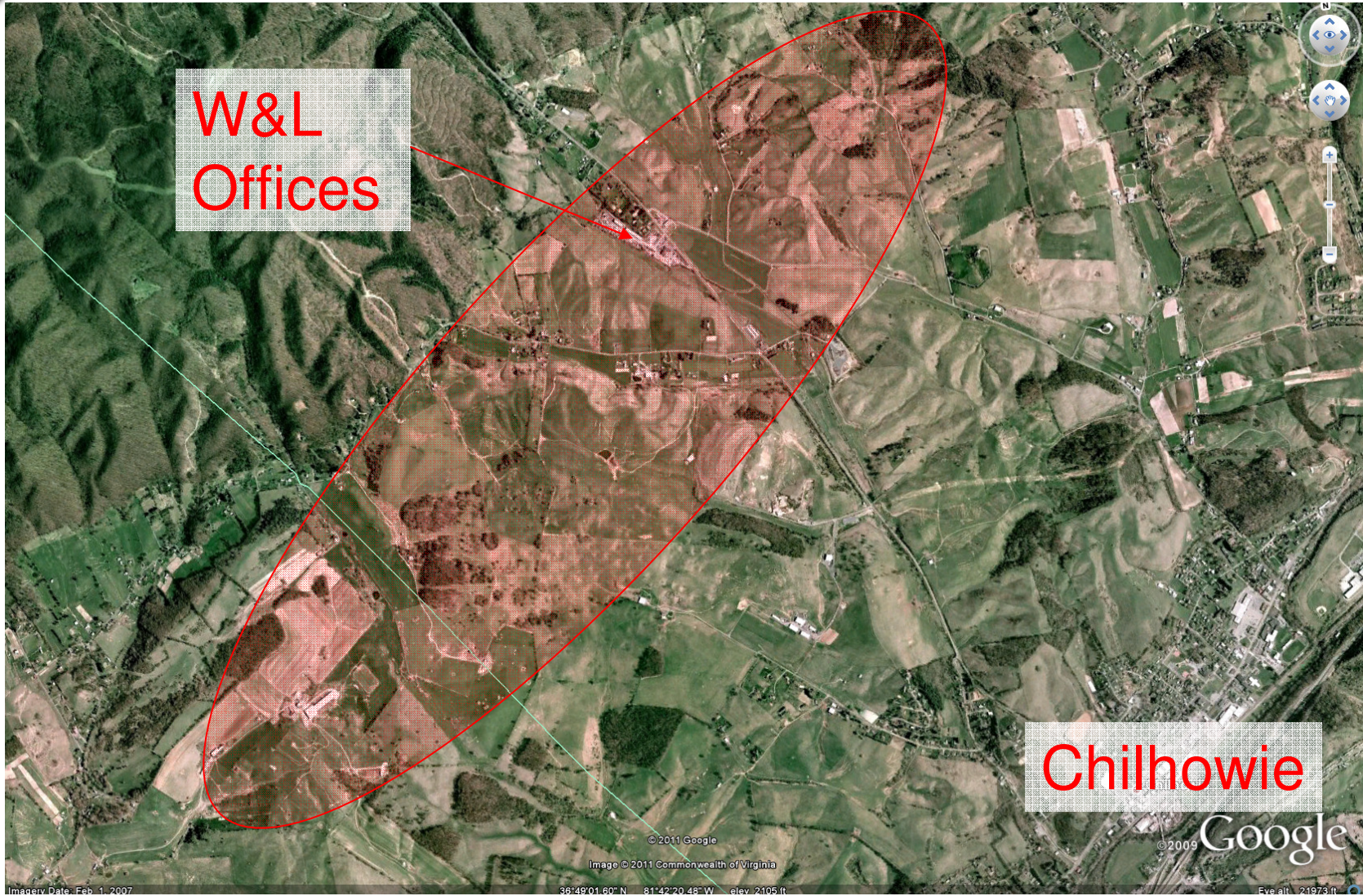
Washington and Smyth



Heavily Damaged Areas – Exit 29 at Glade Spring (Washington County)



Heavily Damaged Areas – Routes 107 and 609 north of Chilhowie (Smyth County)



Aftermath Photos





Truck Stop at Exit 29



Truck Stop at Exit 29



Truck Stop at Exit 29



Business adjacent to I-81



**Destroyed homes along Stagecoach Road
(Rte 1312) in Glade Spring**



Destroyed homes along Route 11 North of Exit 29



**Signal and Sign Damage at Exit 29 & Route 11
Roof Damage at Glade AHQ**



Apartments north of Exit 29



**Gates Corp. in
Highlands
Industrial Park**



Damaged Businesses in Chilhowie

VDOT Response

- At 2:00 am VDOT's Traffic Operations Center notified TAMS Monitor and Duty Officer about tractor trailer accidents on I-81
- Lebanon and Wytheville Residency Maintenance Manager called work crews to find them already on-scene. Weather reports called for tornado warnings well in advance of the storms. Mobilized all available equipment and employees.
- Coordinated with area emergency responders to make all roads passable for search and rescue operations. Incident command established in accordance with National Incident Management System (NIMS).



VDOT Response

- TAMS Contract Monitor worked with State Forces to clear tractor trailer wreckage off I-81 since TME could not reach site. All travel lanes opened around 5:30 a.m. Heavy congestion was present during the majority of the day due to drivers slowing down to view the damage.
- Majority of the roadways were open Thursday with exception of those closed due to downed power lines.



Equipment and Personnel for Response

Pieces of State Equipment and State Personnel

- 1 Excavators
- 3 Loaders
- 30 Dump Trucks
- 5 Pickups
- 2 sign trucks
- 60+ VDOT Employees

Pieces of Contractor-Owned Equipment and Contractor Personnel

- 6 Excavators
- 5 Loaders
- 26 Dump Trucks
- 6 Telehandlers
- 6 Skid-steer loaders
- 85+ Contract Employees

Response Issues

- **Multiple responders worked in tight spaces on two-lane secondary roads covered with trees, debris and downed power lines.**
- **Downed power lines hindered access to several primary and secondary routes.**
- **Virginia State Police and local law enforcement provided traffic control to limit interference from the public “touring” the damage. Area was restricted to emergency responders, local residents, and business owners. Permits for entry required.**
- **Oversize work vehicles and equipment from multiple agencies had to take turns maneuvering in confined spaces.**
- **Curfew established by local law enforcement and State Police with reports of looting taking place.**





Debris Removal on Ramblewood Drive (Route 736)



Initial roadway clearing at Route 91 near Exit 29



Debris Removal in Glade Spring



Debris Disposal Facilities on Route 11 and at Highlands Industrial Park (5 total sites)

Initial Damage and Debris Assessments

Assessment for VDOT expenses is currently at \$2,250,000 and over 52,000 cy of debris removal.



Status of Cleanup

- Interstate work is 60% complete. Sign, guardrail, and fencing currently being replaced.
- Primary and Secondary work is 40% complete with permanent repairs to slopes being completed as areas are cleared.
- Work will continue as debris is collected along the right of way by property owners. Anticipated that work will continue through the summer.
- Temporary traffic signal installed at intersection of Route 11 and 91.
- Continue to work closely with Washington County to coordinate debris removal.
- “After Action Review” is planned.