

Hannity (00:00):

All right, 25 now to the top of the hour. Uh, thanks for being with us 809 1Sean, if you wanna be a part of the program. Uh, and a second will we be joined by, uh, Governor Ron DeSantis. I just saw a picture from the AP of what looks like at least three football fields full of trucks, uh, ready stage to go in to get power back up, I'm sure, from Florida and other states as well. But, but they're ready to go in and restore power when this is done. I've never seen a site like that, ever during a hurricane like this. This is as bad as we thought, You know, Southwest Florida, I'm really worried about Sanibel and some of these other areas. Uh, I've gotten images sent to me from Naples, Florida, Fort Myers is getting hammered. I mean, really bad. The flooding has been outta control all the way up through Sarasota, all the way up to, to Tampa.

Hannity (00:54):

And what's, what the storm, the track of the storm has it that it's, it is hitting the coast, the, the west coast of Florida, very, very hard. And it will slowly make its way north, right over Orlando and central Florida, the I4 corridor into the northeastern part of the state by Jacksonville, Ponte Vedra, that area, and then into Georgia and into, uh, South Carolina. I have been given some information. If you know somebody, they, they evacuated two and a half million people. No, easy task yesterday. Uh, but if you know somebody that didn't evacuate, they're currently in an evacuation zone. There is a, uh, website to go to. It's Floridadisaster.org/info, and you can put in that person's name and address. And when they are able, they've, they've mobilized every state agency right now, and they're coordinating with FEMA. And I know Governor DeSantis, Senator Rubio, that everybody's working hand in hand. Every single state employee. It's all hands on deck. And by the way, they have a Florida disaster fund.org is, you know, donations go to a volunteer Florida 501c3 tax exempt charity. Um, people are gonna need help. There's, there's a lot of destruction. Uh, as a matter of fact, Governor Ron DeSantis is, uh, on our Newsmaker line now. Governor, thanks for being with us. I'm so sorry. It looks to me like geographically at least half, if not two thirds of your state geographically, are gonna be impacted by this.

Gov. DeSantis (02:26):

Well, Sean, you know, when you look at storms and, and you've covered a lot of these, I mean, sometimes you'll have a storm like Hurricane Michael that hit the panhandle. It was a category five, but it was more like a tornado. It was not necessarily a lot of rain, uh, not a lot of storm surge, but it just bulldozed everything in its path. Then you have some others like Irma, uh, which are bigger, and they drop a lot of water, cause a lot of flooding. You know, this, Ian is pretty close to a cat five at landfall. Very, very powerful, but a massive storm, and it's dumping a huge amount of water. I mean, you're obviously seeing the storm surge that you saw in Naples. Uh, it's just now really getting into Lee and Charlotte counties. Uh, so we're gonna see more, uh, flooding there, but then it's gonna meander across the state, basically diagonally, uh, through Orlando and Daytona Beach, and then exit the Atlantic Ocean.

Gov. DeSantis (03:18):

That's gonna drop a huge amount of water. But then when it interacts in the Atlantic, that's gonna affect Northeast Florida, like Nassau County and Duval Jacksonville. Uh, so yeah, you're gonna see wide impacts. Uh, I will tell you, and you mentioned the linemen. We've got over 42,000, uh, linemen and associated personnel. Many states have sent people, uh, to help with the power restoration. It's a massive mobilization. We've got massive numbers of aircraft, high water vehicles, uh, Chinook helicopters, you name it, to be able to help rescue people, uh, to be able to help deliver supplies and

relief. And then obviously, you know, we want a resumption of services as the storm moves through, get people's power back on, make sure fuel is flowing and communications, uh, are restored. Uh, we, we, uh, mobilized in my first year as governor for Dorian, you remember, decimated The Bahamas. It was supposed to hit us in probably Palm Beach as a category five, and it turned north and, and skirted our coast.

Gov. DeSantis ([04:21](#)):

And that was a big mobilization. But this is the biggest mobilization anyone could ever remember. Uh, and we just understand, uh, that this is very important. Those communities in southwest Florida, you know 'em well, Sean, these are fantastic communities. These are fantastic people. Um, they're very, very resilient. Uh, but we're facing something that's really, really significant. And I really appreciate everybody throughout the country, uh, who's offered prayers for the folks down in Southwest Florida. Um, this is, this is a mean storm. And these next couple of hours are gonna be very crucial, uh, in terms of the overall damage, uh, that is ultimately done.

Hannity ([04:57](#)):

Governor was watching you almost begging people to heed the warnings and the projections that the storm about the storm and a massive mobilization asking two and a half million Floridians to, to leave these coastal areas in southwest Florida. Many, many did. And I, I wanna emphasize here for people that maybe didn't evacuate, um, you have emergency, uh, team standing by in the moment that they can go in. If you know somebody that didn't evacuate in an evacuation zone, uh, you wanna register that person's name at Floridadisaster.org/info. And, and by the way, they have a Floridadisasterfund.org. That's another state website that's up there for donations. And, and believe me, the people are gonna need it. You talk about the electric company, uh, trucks that are staged. Governor, they're all staged in one, one big area that looked the size of three football fields. Um, I, I was shocked that they were that on the ready today, and you had no idea whether or not the forecast would be a hundred percent accurate. They turned out to be accurate and more.

Gov. DeSantis ([06:05](#)):

Well, the, we have them stage all over the state, so that's one big landing area, but there's 30 sites overall all throughout the state. Um, they're gonna have access, Obviously Southwest Florida will be first, and they'll work their way up as the storm passes. I mean, I think one of the challenges when you have a storm of this magnitude with the surge we're seeing and potentially a lot of wind damage, is, you know, it's one thing to just have a power line go down and hook it back up. It's another thing if the entire infrastructure is uprooted and because the storm is so bad, and if it's the ladder, then those crews have a, have a duty not only to hook it back up, they're really gonna have to reconstruct some of the infrastructure. And so they know that, and they're prepared for that.

Gov. DeSantis ([06:49](#)):

Uh, but that obviously adds to the challenges in terms of what you're seeing, uh, with the infrastructure. But yeah, the number of people, and when I was, I went and gave him a pep talk to thank 'em what they're doing. I mean, I had, I saw people from Alabama, Louisiana, Texas, you name it. Obviously we've got a lot of people in Florida as well. Uh, but there are people coming. And then we were driving back to Tallahassee from Lake City. And if you looked at I10 going, uh, eastbound, uh, every other car was like a utility truck. I mean, so there's more resources that are continuing to pour into the state of Florida because we just understand how important it is that some people, hopefully we don't have a lot, but

some people very well may have, uh, injuries. There may be fatalities, there may be people that need to be rescued, some people are gonna have their homes, um, damage some unfortunately may be even destroyed. But the vast majority of people are gonna be able to get back in their homes. And what they want to do is just have, have the services restored as quickly as possible. So we're, we're using all levers at our disposal to help make that happen.

Hannity ([07:48](#)):

So I have friends in, in Fort Myers, I was actually able to send some videos over to your team just so they can get a, a look see of what was happening there. And, and Fort Myers is being hit very hard right now as we speak. And within a 10 minute period, I got one video. 10 minutes later, the tide was up four to five feet. The surge was up four to five feet, literally covering an entire tennis court. There was a, a five foot fence, I believe, a, a dog park. And in the first photo it was, you know, maybe up two feet, the, the surge, and it was nearly covered 10 minutes later. That's how dramatically quickly, you know, this surge is coming. And I know in Tampa, for example, they're experiencing at low tide this morning, what they call a, a reverse storm surge, where it's a phenomenon where the, when the storm winds push water out of the bay. Um, and then when it comes back, it comes back with a huge, uh, storm surge, which they're expecting, I think, high tide this afternoon, soon of, of six, eight feet, maybe even higher. So that's a danger for Tampa, Is that correct?

Gov. DeSantis ([08:55](#)):

Yeah, I think so. I mean, I think obviously if we were, you and I were talking, uh, 36 hours ago, the forecast was a direct hit into the Tampa Bay area, and that's typically forecasted as, as the worst case scenario for Florida, just because of how vulnerable that is. Of course, the forecast, uh, has shifted dramatically. And so now we're looking at southwest Florida, it's gonna move up the coast, but that will have impacts on, on the Tampa Bay area. I would say in Fort Myers, if you look at how this storm is entering the Florida Peninsula. Fort Myers, Cape Coral, some of those areas, they're kind of on that northeast quadrant of the, that storm just turning counterclockwise. So that's, that's gonna churn up a massive amount of water into the coast, into the coastal communities. You also have different harbors there. Uh, and so you're gonna see that. And so this is gonna be really, really significant and it's happening right now. And really the next, uh, probably two hours, um, are gonna be the, the maximum impacts for both Lee and Charlotte counties.

Hannity ([09:56](#)):

One concern I've heard from people that are in some of these, these condos, you know, smaller condo buildings, anywhere between eight stories and 15 stories, is they're concerned, uh, about the, the structural engineering, uh, my understanding of Florida code for many, many years because they're experience a slight sway in the building. Isn't that, isn't that structurally engineered to do that in moments like this, to withstand the type of winds that they're taking on right now?

Gov. DeSantis ([10:24](#)):

So all if, if their new build relatively new buildings, I mean, they have, uh, they have to be built to very high building codes. We have the strongest in the country, and it's built precisely for these types of situations. And so, uh, my sense would be, because there's been a lot of growth in southwest Florida over the last 20 years in particular, that most of those structures, um, have likely been built, uh, to withstand really, really serious, uh, wind damage and hurricane force winds. But you know, Shawn, me, you're talking about, you know, 150 miles an hour, a lot can happen there. Trees, there's a whole host of

other things, so nothing's ever foolproof. But I do believe, I remember going, uh, after Hurricane Michael, which is a category five in Panama City, and you could look at a building that was built, you know, relatively recently, and it withstood it right next door, there could be a building from like the 1950s and it was totally, utterly demolished.

Gov. DeSantis ([11:22](#)):

And so I do think our building codes, it costs a little bit more to build as a result of that. But you do it for situations like this because you, you want everything to be able, uh, to, to make it through. Now, all of these structures, um, you know, on the, on the first floor in the beach communities, I mean, there's just so, so much flooding that they're gonna have to take care of the flooding for sure. And I think that's gonna be true for a lot of homes. Uh, a lot of condos, a lot of hotels. I will say though, there has been a trend in recent years, some of the people that are fortunate enough to live, uh, on those beautiful, uh, islands, barrier islands, they will build their homes up on kind of, um, almost like pedestals, knowing that there could be surge. So it'll be interesting to see in places like Sanibel, cuz if you look, some of those homes are built up, uh, whether that ended up being effective because Santa Bell got hit, one of the first to really get hit. I mean, it was like the whole, the whole island was basically turned into a river. There was so much water.

Hannity ([12:16](#)):

I've, I've been hearing the same report. What do you know about Sanibel? How bad was it?

Gov. DeSantis ([12:20](#)):

Well, it was, I mean, you know, it's, it's one of the, it's one of the major barrier islands, and it was one of the first ones to get really that, that churn of, of driving the storm surge. And so it, so it drove it up. Totally flooded, uh, uh, the streets and, and put most of the island, um, underwater. And so, you know, those are folks that, that live there. You know, most of those, you know, folks, you know, you know, have means, I would imagine most of them evacuated and, and have places to stay. So hopefully we don't have, uh, much in the way of, of, of damage to, to, to human beings. Uh, but yeah, I mean, I think this is gonna be the biggest, uh, the biggest surge event, uh, in the history of Sanibel.

Hannity ([13:00](#)):

The media made a big deal over the fact early yesterday that, that President Biden had called mayors all throughout the varying cities that were expected to be impacted by this, but hadn't called you, but in fact, he did call you and you had a conversation with him. How did that conversation go?

Gov. DeSantis ([13:17](#)):

Well, when I was asked about it, my view is like, look, my phone is open. I wanna work for the people of Florida. Um, uh, you know, obviously I've been a, I've been a, a big critic of, of Biden's policy since he's been president, and we fought in Florida against those policies. But the same time, uh, I've got people that are in need. We're working with the locals who we work very well with. We wanna work with FEMA too, and I want that to be seamless. And so I said, my phone line's open. So he called, um, you know, he pledged his support, uh, for us. He has approved a pre landfall declaration of emergency support. We just, uh, sent him a request for a hundred percent reimbursement, uh, for the restoration efforts, uh, for the first 60 days post storm. And we hope that he will, he will approve that. Um, we, you know, President Trump approved something similar after Hurricane Michael, my first year as governor. So, uh, hopefully we'll get the support. But my view on this, Sean, is, you know, I I I battle it's

Hannity ([14:13](#)):

Not a time for Competitions

Gov. DeSantis ([14:13](#)):

Yeah, exactly. I mean, you know, at some point it's like there's some people that wanna politicize everything, and some of these legacy media outlets, they can't help themselves. I mean, that's all they want to do. They want to use the peril and the misery of people in places like Southwest Florida to be able to advance their political gender. That's wrong. They don't give a about these people in southwest Florida. They just wanna try to advance their agenda.

Hannity ([14:38](#)):

Governor, we're on 700 stations. This is the greatest audience on radio. Uh, I know people listening want to help. Um, the people of Florida, what can they do?

Gov. DeSantis ([14:48](#)):

Well, I think if you go to Florida disaster.org, we have different options to be able, uh, to help, uh, in terms of volunteer, you can volunteer time, uh, and you can send, uh, donations. We're gonna be doing a lot of relief efforts for folks in the, particularly Southwest Florida. And Sean, you know, there's a lot of needs that happen. There's just gonna be some basic subsistence needs. Some people may have their homes destroyed, they may need temporary housing. We wanna be able to help 'em with that, and we wanna be able to meet the needs of the people. There, there's go, there's state programs, there's FEMA, there's other stuff. But, you know, some of the money going to private groups can just be deployed very efficiently. And so those types of, of contributions are good. What we don't think has been effective is for people to send items to us. Right. Uh, we've got a lot of supplies. We're good. We're prepared. So if you want to help, just send some money or volunteer your time.

Hannity ([15:43](#)):

All right. Governor DeSantis, please know that, uh, uh, the state of Florida, all the residents there are in our prayers. Thank you so much. We're wishing you the best. And uh, this is not gonna be an easy one. Thank you for being with us and updating us.

Gov. DeSantis ([15:54](#)):

Thank you. Bye-bye.