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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Madison County Severe Weather Response
Madison County, NC – July 31, 2026

The National Weather Service Greenville-Spartanburg office confirmed an **EF-0 tornado** touched down in the Allegheny community of Madison County at approximately 5:51 p.m. EDT and remained on the ground until approximately 5:53 p.m. EDT. The tornado produced estimated peak winds of 80 miles per hour, traveled approximately 1.1 miles, and reached a maximum width of 75 yards. Damage assessments identified numerous snapped and uprooted trees, as well as broken limbs, with minimal structural damage. While the overall damage pattern was determined to be relatively minor, National Weather Service officials confirmed that the damage was consistent with an EF-0 tornado and matched radar indications observed during the storm.

Before the tornado touched down, Madison County Emergency Management Coordinator Patrick Ward posted weather updates on social media, contacted public safety agencies, and began positioning assets as a precautionary measure. Ward said, "emergency responders, fire departments, law enforcement agencies, public works personnel, utility crews, and volunteer partners responded to numerous reports of fallen trees, blocked roadways, power disruptions, and storm-related hazards throughout the evening and worked quickly to clear transportation routes, restore essential services, and ensure the safety of residents and visitors."

Madison County is grateful for the dedication and professionalism demonstrated during this event by emergency responders including the fire departments in the communities of Big Pine, Ebbs Chapel, Hot Springs, Laurel, Marshall, Mars Hill, Spring Creek, and Walnut; the Madison County Sheriff's Office; Mars Hill Police Department; Madison County 911; North Carolina Forest Service; Buncombe County Emergency Management; Buncombe County Fire Departments including Leicester, Jupiter, and Fairview; West Yancey Volunteer Fire Department; Yancey County Emergency Management; North Carolina Wildlife Law Enforcement; North Carolina Highway Patrol; North Carolina Department of Transportation; Chatham County 911; North Carolina Emergency Management; all utility providers; and community volunteers. According to Ward, their immediate response helped minimize impacts and assisted residents during a rapidly developing weather situation.

County Manager Rod Honeycutt said, "throughout the event, lessons learned and best practices from Hurricane Helene guided the County's whole of local government response. We continue to update our playbooks and refine procedures to provide safe and immediate emergency response measures." Honeycutt added that within 24 hours of the weather event, primary and secondary roads and most utilities were restored, while noting that the County would continue to coordinate with local, state, and federal partners as damage assessments are finalized.

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