Marking the Damage

Mickey Merritt, Texas Forest Service, Bayou Region: In assessing the trees we’re also trying to determine whether the trees that do have leaves whether they will ultimately survive.

Jackie Cole, Galveston Island Tree Conservancy: FEMA has standards for removing debris. What they consider debris. Dead trees, and trees that don’t are not going to show vigor and be survivors are considered debris and are eligible for FEMA removal. Which means that FEMA will pay for these trees rather than the city of Galveston.

Mickey Merritt: And the trees that do have leaves and have been marked for removal it’s because they either don’t have enough leaves or canopy level to sustain the roots system and we just felt like their survival rate or percentage was very, very low.

Jackie Cole: The first criteria has been to work with the forest service to help us identify those trees that we feel like may survive and come back with vigor to be a tree again.

Matt Weaver, Texas Forest Service, Bayou Region: We’ve sectioned off the areas into 16 segments including Broadway as its own which we’re going to be doing last so that will be number 16. We’re really trying to make sure that the public’s aware of what’s happening and when it’s taking place.

Dr. William Johnson, Agrilife Extension, Galveston County: This has been a psychological shock to the system. We had the physical damage done by Ike, but there’s been a significant psychological trauma and it takes everybody’s involvement and everybody’s help and expertise to get us from where we at to recovery.

Dr. Don Wilkerson, Agrilife Extension: It really helps those individuals see first-hand the devastation that has occurred and kind of begins to help them understand what lies ahead but they also played a very valuable role in the initial assessment.