

## Winlink Training Bulletin #25

The Pinellas ACS Winlink training net is used to familiarize ARES®/ACS participants with Winlink skills and to practice digital network operations. A summary training bulletin is delivered via Winlink to all registered Winlink Training Net participants prior to each scheduled net. A detailed bulletin that includes instructions for performing each scheduled task will also be posted to the Pinellas ACS Web site prior to each net.

### 1.1 NET DESCRIPTION

The following information is applicable to this week's training net.

- a. Date: **Wednesday** March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023
- b. Time: 1930 Hours Local
- c. Duration: 1 Hour
- d. Type: Mixed Mode. Voice traffic will take place on the W4ACS repeater and digital exchanges will take place via Winlink.
- e. Net Control: WA1RYQ
- f. Support material:
  - (1) Incident Action Plan - PACS Winlink Training Group

### 1.2 ASSIGNMENT LIST:

Work assignments, special instructions, and the communications plan for the net are documented in the Incident Action Plan (ICS 204 and ICS 205) for the PACS Winlink Training Group.

### 1.3 NET ACTIVITIES:

An overview of the planned net activities is documented below.

- a. The NCS will establish the net at 1930 Hours local using the W4ACS repeater.

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- b. The NCS will request check-ins. The NCS will include Echolink in the call for check-ins.
- c. The NCS will brief net participants on the work assignments and special instructions contained in the Assignment List (ICS 204) and Incident Communication Plan (ICS 205).
- d. The NCS will field comments and questions about the Assignment List (ICS 204) and Communications Plan (ICS 205) from net participants.
- e. The NCS will next direct each station to create and send a Winlink Check-In message to the NCS and the Pinellas Admin Officer.

**Note:** *The Winlink Check-in and Check-out forms should not be completed before the net begins. Net participants should also ensure that the REQUEST MESSAGE RECEIPT box is checked on all messages.*

- f. The NCS will send a **Winlink General Message (ICS 213)** to all net participants.
- g. Using the information contained in the **Winlink General Message (ICS 213)**, create a **Field Situation Report**. Once complete, send the message to all net participants.
- h. Using the photo attached to the **Winlink General Message** created by the NCS, extract and then attach the photo to a new ICS 213 message. Resize the photo in accordance with the directions provided by net control. Send the completed ICS 213 to all net participants and the Pinellas ACS Admin Officer.
- i. The NCS will close the digital segment of the net by using a rollcall to direct each station in turn to send a **Winlink Check Out** message to the NCS and the Pinellas Admin Officer.
- j. The NCS will field comments and questions from net participants.
- k. The NCS will remind all net participants to finalize their ICS 214 and ICS 309 and send a copy to the NCS and the Pinellas ACS Admin officer following net closure.
- l. Following the question-and-answer period, the NCS will close the net.

**END SUMMARY WINLINK BULLETIN**

## 1.4 MESSAGE INFORMATION:

### 1.4.1 Winlink Check-in Form:

When the net control station is ready to begin taking Winlink Check-ins, the NCS will request that each station create and send a Winlink Check-in message.

- a. Group Name: PinCo ACS Winlink Training Net
- b. Date/Time: This value should correspond to the time and date that the message is sent. Therefore, the Check-in message cannot be created ahead of time and stored as a draft.
- c. Status: NET
- d. Band: Enter the appropriate value.
- e. Mode: Enter the appropriate value.
- f. Send To: Send completed message to the NCS and the Pinellas Admin Officer.
- g. Calls Signs of Initial On-Site Operator(s): Enter your FCC Call sign
- h. Station Contact Name: Enter your first and last name
- i. Station Call sign: Enter your FCC Call Sign.
- j. Location: Enter a street address for your current location.
- k. LAT, LONG, MGRS, GRID: Enter your current latitude, longitude, MGRS and Maidenhead grid data.
- l. Comments: Weather conditions at your current location.

### 1.4.2 Winlink Check-Out form:

When the business of the net is complete, the NCS will request that each station create and send a Winlink Check-out message.

- a. Group Name: PinCo ACS Winlink Training Net
- b. Date/Time: This value should correspond to the time and date that the message is sent. Therefore, the Check-in message cannot be created ahead of time and stored as a draft.

- c. Status: NET
- d. Band: Enter the appropriate value.
- e. Mode: Enter the appropriate value.
- f. Send To: Send completed message to the NCS and the Pinellas Admin Officer.
- g. Calls Signs of Initial On-Site Operator(s): Enter your FCC Call sign
- h. Station Contact Name: Enter your first and last name
- i. Station Call sign: Enter your FCC Call Sign.
- j. Location: Enter a street address for your current location.
- k. LAT, LONG, MGRS, GRID: Enter your current latitude, longitude, MGRS and Maidenhead grid data.
- l. Comments: Version of Winlink Express and Winlink Templates.

### 1.5 CONFIGURE WINLINK TO ANNOTATE *PRIORITY, IMMEDIATE, AND FLASH* MESSAGES.

Message traffic with a precedence of **Priority**, **Immediate**, or **Flash** must be rapidly identified and processed as soon as possible. However, during an activation event, users may encounter a high traffic volume and find it difficult to quickly identify traffic with a high priority precedence. To assist users with the identification of high priority traffic, Winlink can be configured to highlight and sound an audible alarm upon receipt of a **Priority**, **Immediate**, or **Flash** message.

- a. Use the “Message Notification and Forwarding” option on the Settings pull-down menu to configure Winlink to make a sound when a message is received that has a precedence of **Priority** of higher. Refer to Figure 1.
- b. Select a “New message notification sound” and configure Winlink to repeat the sound until the message is read.

**NOTE:** A notification sound must be selected for Winlink to properly annotate high priority messages. If the notification sound is set to **None**, messages will not be highlighted.

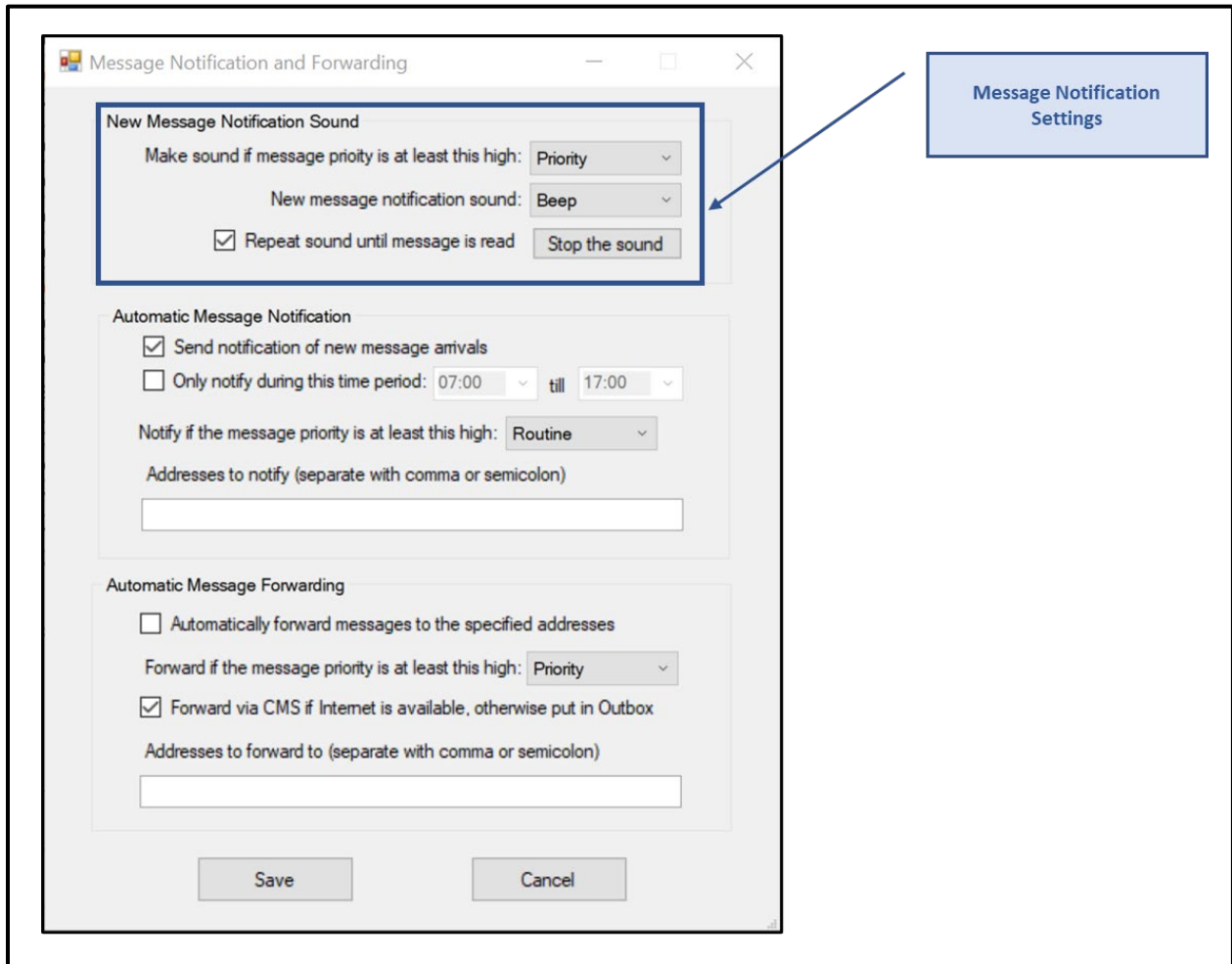


Figure 1. Message Notification Settings

## 1.6 MESSAGE PRECEDENCE

During an activation event, prioritizing the flow of information is a critical component of information management. Precedence is the message attribute that enables a user to prioritize each message properly.

Four precedence levels are defined within Winlink. Messages generated by ACS/ARES® will only be assigned a Winlink precedence of ROUTINE, PRIORITY, or IMMEDIATE. Under no circumstances will any message be assigned a Winlink precedence of FLASH. When creating a

new message, Table I should be used to identify the Winlink precedence that corresponds to the appropriate ARRL® NTS™ precedence definition.

***NOTE:*** *A space character must proceed to precedence flag in the subject line.*

***Good:*** *Subject: this is a test message P/*

***Bad:*** *Subject: this is a test messageP/*

For additional information about message precedence, refer to paragraph 5.1.2 of the *Pinellas County ACS/ARES® Emergency Communication Plan and Standard Operating Procedures* document.

<b>Table I. WINLINK Message Precedence</b>			
<b>Winlink Precedence</b>	<b>ARRL® NTS™ Precedence</b>	<b>SUBJECT LINE Priority Indicator</b>	<b>Notes</b>
FLASH (Z)	N/A	Z/	<b><i>DO NOT USE</i></b>
IMMEDIATE (O)	EMERGENCY	O/	
PRIORITY (P)	PRIORITY	P/	
ROUTINE (R)	ROUTINE	R/	Default for all messages

### 1.7 PHOTOGRAPH

During a deployment, the operator and/or the served agency may be required to send an image to a Winlink destination. The image may show storm damage or other relevant information. For this exercise, assume you are operating from home and the EOC has requested pictures of an approaching Thunderstorm.

### 1.7.1 Attach and Resize Image

Create a **Winlink General Message (ICS 213)** and attach the image file sent to you by the NCS. Once the file is attached to the message, it will need to be resized before it can be sent via Winlink.

**NOTE:** If the file size is displayed in **RED**, it indicates that the picture is too large to be sent via Winlink.

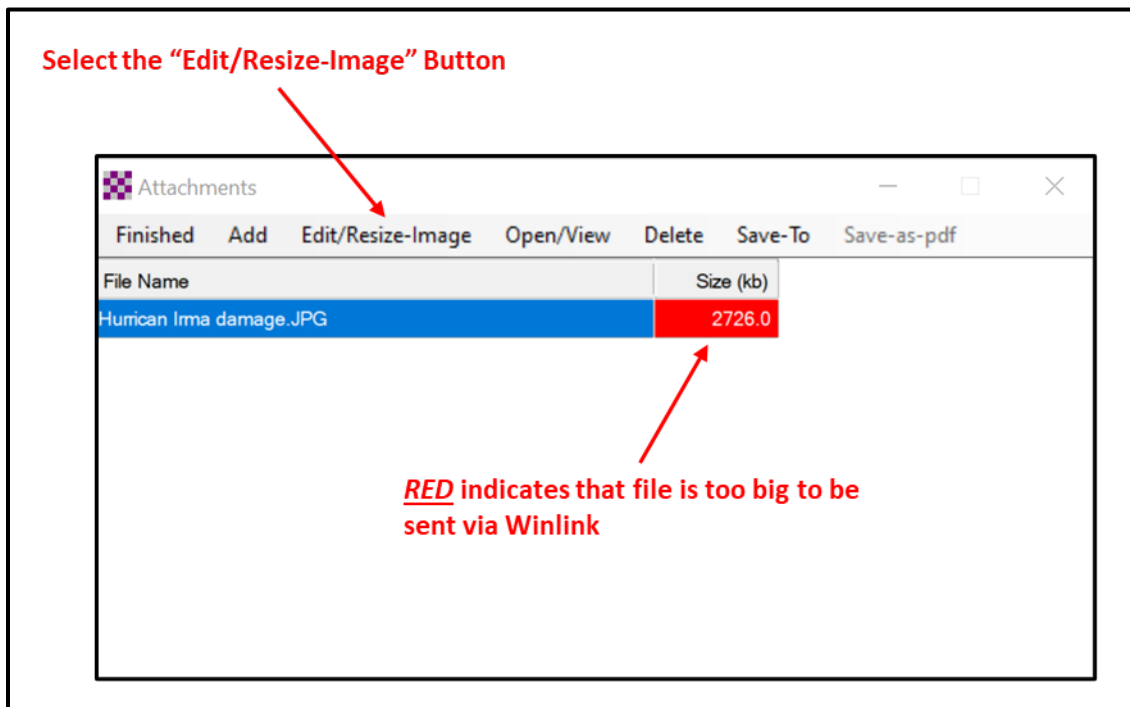


Figure 2. Message Attachment Window

- a. Depress the **Edit/Resize-Image button** to resize the image. Refer to Figure 2 for button location. This will cause the **Image Edit** window, Figure 3, to be displayed. Using this window, the user can crop, resize, or rotate the selected image.

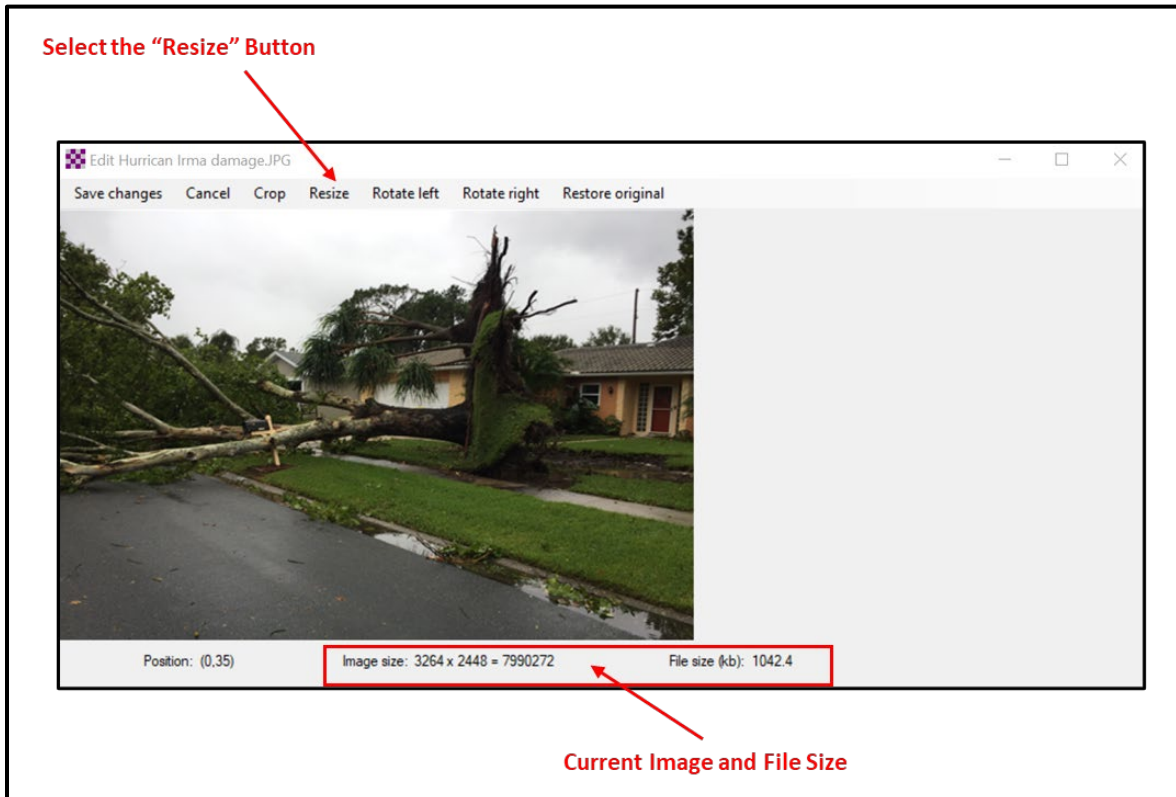


Figure 3. Edit Image Window

- b. Depress the **Resize** button. The Image Resize window will be displayed. Refer to Figure 4.
- c. Enter a file size value in the **Desired size (kb)** block. For this exercise, enter **25**. Then, depress the **Change Size** button.

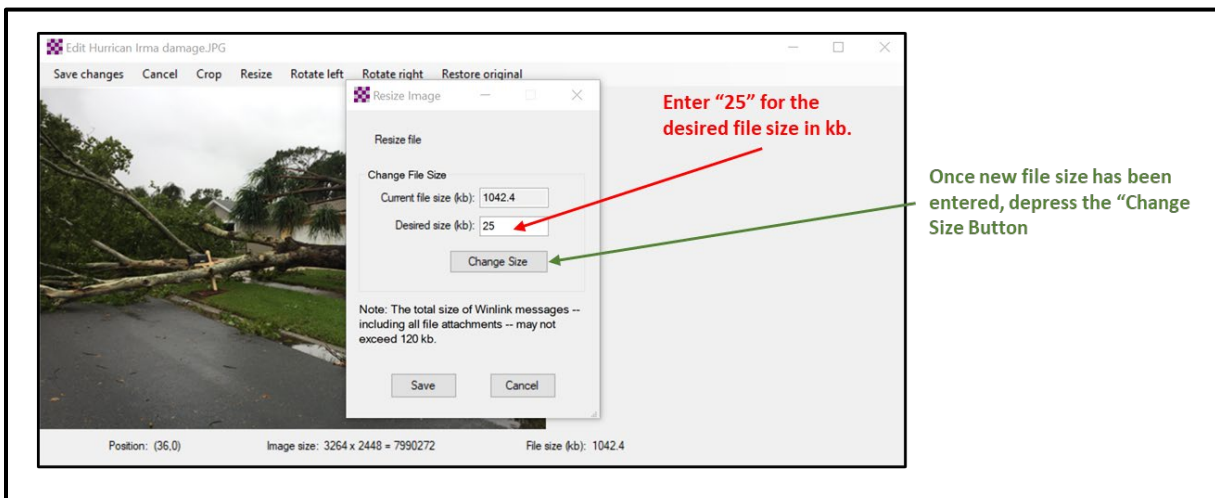


Figure 4. Resize Image Window



- d. The **Current file size (kb)** field, refer to Figure 5, should now indicate that the image has been resized. Depress the **Save** button to save the image size changes.

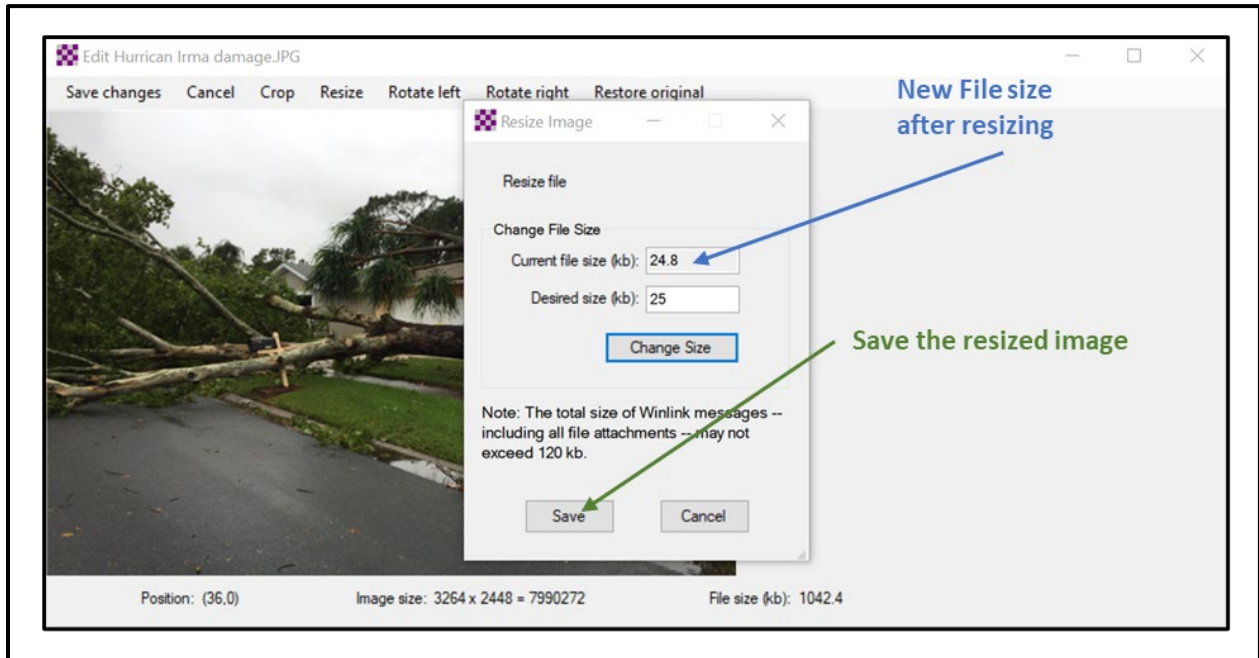


Figure 5. Save Resized Image

- e. Refer to Figure 6. Note that the image and file sizes displayed at the bottom of the window now indicate that the image has been reduced in size to 24.8 kb. From this window, the user can continue modifying the image by using the **Crop** or **Rotate** options. For this exercise, complete the edit by depressing the **Save Changes** button.
- f. Refer to Figure 7. Depress the **Finished** button on the **Attachment** window.
- g. Send the **General Message (ICS 213)** to all net participants.

**NOTE:** Even with a reduction in size to 25kb, it will take 5-minutes to send this message via standard Winlink Packet. If instead the message is sent using Vara FM, the transmission time can be reduced to less than 1-minute.

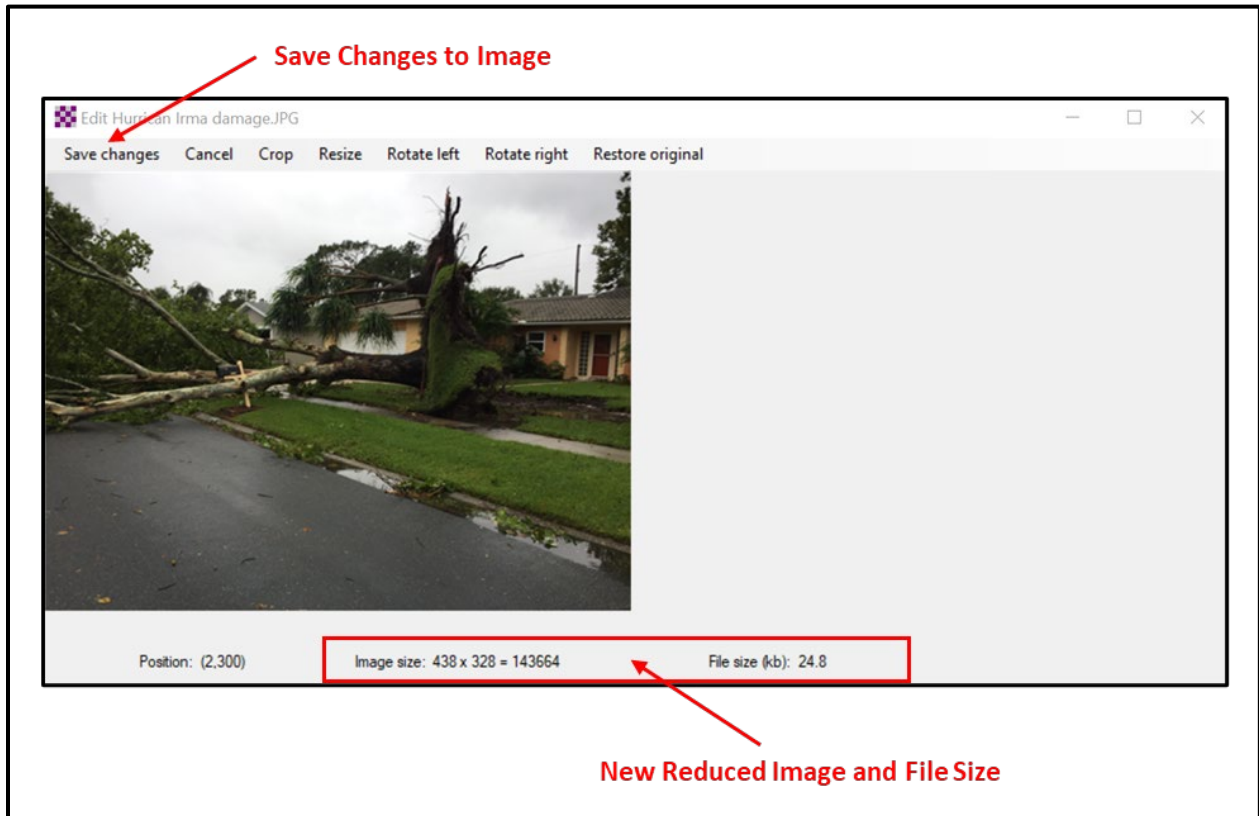


Figure 6. Save Changes

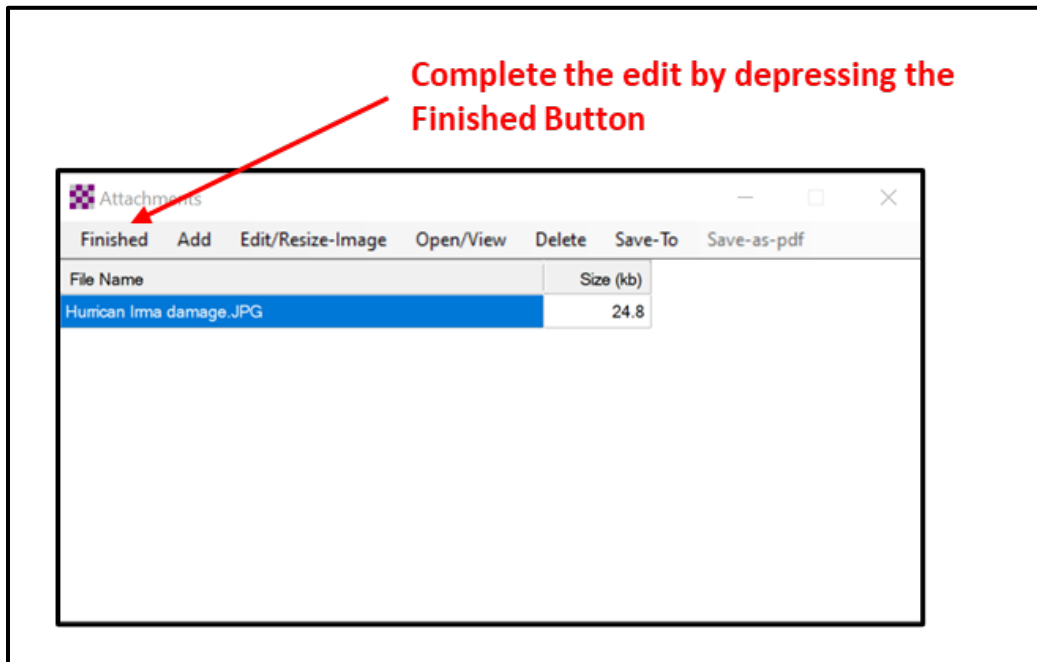


Figure 7. Attachment Window.