

# State Emergency Operations Center



## 2023 Wrangell Landslide Incident Situation Report

December 11, 2023, at 1600

SEOC Preparedness Level 2



### Contact

State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) 907-428-7100

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## **Incident Overview**

On Monday, November 20, 2023, at 2051, the City and Borough of Wrangell experienced a major landslide at Mile 11 of Zimovia Highway. The State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) was notified of the landslide at 2130 on November 20, 2023, recalled staff, activated to Level-2, and is coordinating multiple requests for state-level resources in support of Wrangell's Incident Command.

On November 21, 2023, Alaska Governor Mike Dunleavy declared a state disaster emergency for the City and Borough of Wrangell. On November 26, 2023, Governor Dunleavy also declared a state disaster for the City of Coffman Cove. On December 4, 2023, Governor Dunleavy amended his state declaration of disaster to add the entire Southeast Island School District Regional Education Attendance Area, including the City of Craig and Hydaburg for both Public and Individual Assistance.

On December 7, 2023, Governor Dunleavy declared a state disaster for public assistance for the City of Diomedes in response to their collapsed city office building.

## **Significant Operations Updates**

### **Wrangell City and Borough:**

On December 6, 2023, The City and Borough of Wrangell announced a suspension of the search for the last mission person from the landslide after 15 days of exhaustive effort by the Wrangell Volunteer Search and Rescue teams. The search included K9 scent detection dogs and local heavy equipment operators who combed through the complex landslide debris field. All accessible areas above and within the intertidal zone were searched. Search and rescue personnel and a scent detection K9 team will be available in the community and available to reengage with active searching if new information is developed.

On Friday, December 8<sup>th</sup> the SEOC changed out Division Supervisors in Wrangell. The new Division Supervisor spent the weekend partnering with National Crisis Response Canines and Wrangell Volunteer Fire Department. Meetings were conducted at schools, a community outreach event, and the local senior center. Preliminary Damage Assessment teams deployed to Wrangell today and will begin assessments tomorrow.

Crews from the City and Borough of Wrangell and the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) continue to work on the Mile 11 slide. DOT&PF installed a new 36" culvert to improve drainage, as well as 3 dams and a small lake for debris collection. An additional 36" culvert is being installed today, and a 72" culvert will begin installation Wednesday. DOT&PF have announced road closures Tuesday, likely continuing into Wednesday, due to weather.

Division of Geologic and Geophysical Surveys (DGGS) continues to provide technical assessments and analysis while collecting LiDAR datasets across the affected southeast region. DGGS compiled and completed a factsheet about landslides to be disseminated to the public. DGGS will participate in a community radio public meeting this weekend in Wrangell.

A Red Cross 3-person Incident Care Condolence Team continues to work in the community to help those grieving. Two National Crisis Response Canines have arrived in Wrangell. Out of ongoing concern for slide

risk, several residents have not returned to their homes and the Wrangell Division Supervisor is meeting with them to coordinate assistance.

**Recovery Branch:**

The State Individual Assistance registration telephone hotline and website opened on November 28, 2023, and applications are being accepted from the state-declared areas.

State Public Assistance is providing communities in the declared area with technical advice on the disaster reimbursement process. All current applications are for the Wrangell area although other communities have damages.

Current registrations as of 0800, December 11, 2023.

IA Applications Received:	17 (13 Wrangell, 4 Prince of Wales)
PA Applications Received:	1
Total Disbursements:	Pending

Joint Preliminary Damage Assessment teams deployed today, and assessments will begin tomorrow in Wrangell. Once complete in Wrangell, the team will continue to Prince of Wales for additional assessments.

**Diomedes Division:**

On Sunday, November 26, 2023, the community reported that the city office building, constructed in 1978, had several wooden supports fail on one side of the structure. The following day, the remaining supports collapsed leaving the building on the ground, with the northwest corner resting on the community elementary school. Foundation damage resulted in the building being condemned, and demolition is planned.

On Sunday, a structural assessment by a team including a DOT&PF engineer, the Bering Strait School District's (BSSD) Director of Maintenance, and representatives from Kawerak and the City of Diomedes assessed the conditions of Diomedes's school and city office buildings.

The assessment reports the school is structurally sound with minor damage, exterior siding, trim, and interior drywall cracks. No mechanical or structural issues were found. Bering Straits School District has moved to online learning while the school is closed to in-person learning for safety until the collapsed office building is removed.

One Alaska State Defense Force (ASDF) member, in Diomedes, is being activated to provide an on-the-ground presence for SEOC and to support the local community in their response and building demolition.

**Other Southeast Communities Group:**

**Prince of Wales Island (POW):** On Tuesday, November 28, 2023, the SEOC was notified of damage caused by flooding and landslides across Prince of Wales Island. The City of Craig reported their public works department did emergency route clearance work across the island. While no injuries were reported,

several homes were damaged. Other damages were reported in Hydaburg and the Unorganized Borough area of the Island. The City of Craig declared a local disaster emergency on November 30, 2023.

SEOC Division Supervisor visited Prince of Wales Island on December 1-3, 2023, meeting with Craig and Hydaburg City officials, residents, and the power operator. The cities, DOT&PF, and power utility are engaged in line repairs, debris clearance road repairs with new culvert installation. Preliminary Damage Assessment teams will conduct assessments later this week on the island.

DOT&PF is providing technical assistance to the City of Coffman Cove at SEOC's request on community roadway repair and ongoing landslide risk. DGGs provided some local landslide risk information to the city over the weekend.

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### **SEOC Operations Brief**

SEOC Operations Briefings will be conducted on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays at 0800 via Zoom.

The next Situation Report will be released on Wednesday, December 13, 2023, at 1600.

**Please email the 2023 Wrangell Landslide conference at [landslide@ready.alaska.gov](mailto:landslide@ready.alaska.gov)**

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### **Individual Assistance Applications Are Open, To Apply:**




Call 1-844-445-7131, Monday-Friday, 0800-1600




Or Apply Online at [ready.alaska.gov/Recovery/IA](https://ready.alaska.gov/Recovery/IA)

**The Last Day to Apply is January 27, 2024**

## Lifeline Status

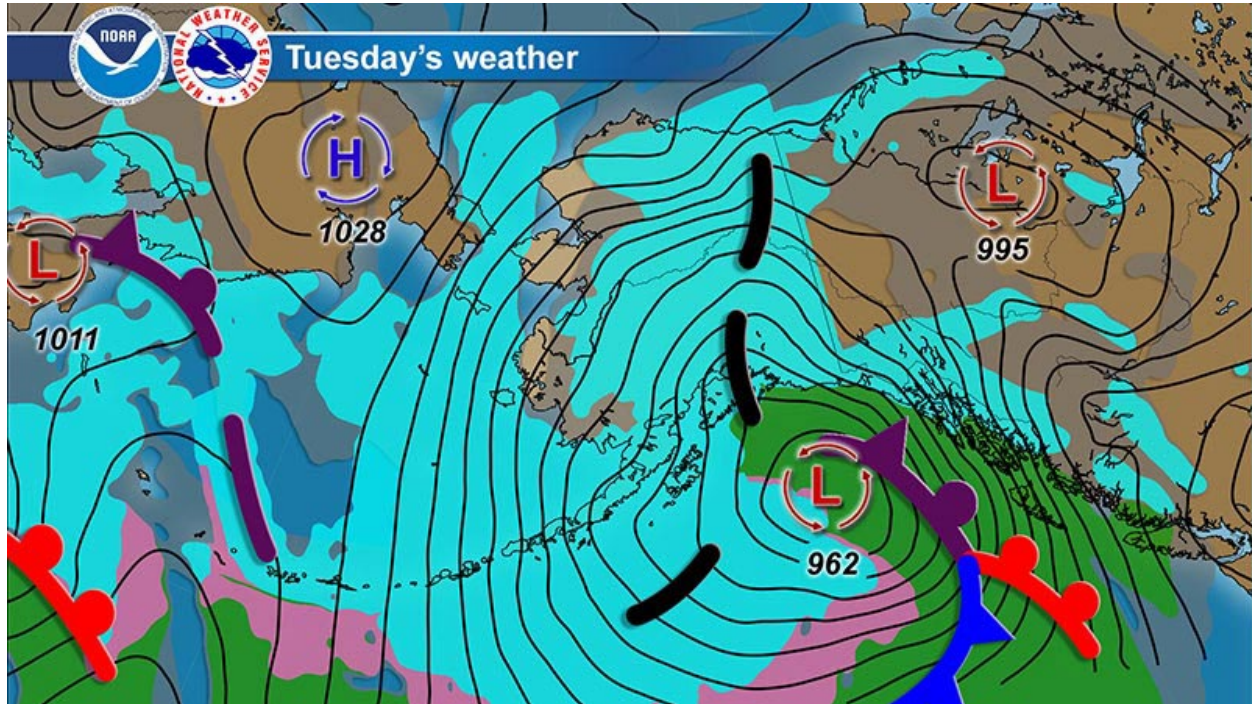
 <p><b>Alaska Overall</b></p>	       
<p><b>Impacted Areas</b></p>	       

	<p><b>Food, Hydration, and Shelter</b></p>	
	 <p><b>Shelter</b></p>	<p><b>POW:</b> The Division Supervisor visited the community and noted at least 2 homes were damaged near mile 4.25 of Port St. Nichols Road, and a community water line uncovered by flooding. DOT&amp;PF personnel are on location to provide road repair assessment along with slope stability assessment.</p> <p><b>Recovery Br:</b> State Individual Assistance (IA) hotline and online IA registration remain open for the entire declared area. There have been 21 applications submitted, 17 from Wrangell, 2 from Craig, and 1 each from Klawock and Thorne Bay.</p>
	<p><b>Communications</b></p>	

	 <p><b>Infrastructure</b></p>	<p><b>Southeast:</b> The Notice to Mariners regarding United States Coast Guard (USCG) Channel-16 VHF communications in the Southeast region remains in effect. USCG requests mariners relay all unanswered requests for assistance to the USCG including both radio and phone.</p> <p><b>Wrangell:</b> Residents continue to rely on deployed Starlink receivers for connectivity south of the slide area. Utilities are working to re-establish regular service, with an estimate of at least a week.</p>
	<p><b>Transportation</b></p>	
	 <p><b>Roadways</b></p>	<p><b>Wrangell:</b> DOT&amp;PF crews installed an additional 36-in culvert to supplement an existing 24-in. 3 check dams are in place and a large pool to catch debris and keep culverts protected. Additional embankment and culvert work is scheduled prior to the start of road resurfacing. Ongoing work is weather dependent.</p> <p>Due to ongoing work, today residents will have only two windows to transit the slide area. Tomorrow the slide area will be closed to traffic as a precaution due to ongoing rainfall. Conditions will be reevaluated Wednesday morning.</p>



# Weather Forecast



	Mon 12/11 5 AM	Mon 12/11 8 AM	Mon 12/11 11 AM	Mon 12/11 2 PM	Mon 12/11 5 PM	Mon 12/11 8 PM	Mon 12/11 11 PM	Tue 12/12 2 AM	Tue 12/12 5 AM	Tue 12/12 8 AM	Tue 12/12 11 AM	Tue 12/12 2 PM	Tue 12/12 5 PM	Tue 12/12 8 PM	Tue 12/12 11 PM	Wed 12/13 2 AM	Wed 12/13 5 AM	Wed 12/13 8 AM	Wed 12/13 11 AM	Wed 12/13 2 PM	Wed 12/13 5 PM	Wed 12/13 8 PM	Wed 12/13 11 PM	Thu 12/14 2 AM	Thu 12/14 5 AM	Thu 12/14 8 AM	Thu 12/14 11 AM	Thu 12/14 2 PM	Thu 12/14 5 PM	
Temperature	35°F	36°F	38°F	38°F	38°F	37°F	38°F	37°F	38°F	38°F	41°F	41°F	43°F	44°F	43°F	41°F	40°F	39°F	40°F	40°F	39°F	40°F	39°F	40°F	41°F	42°F	42°F	43°F	42°F	42°F
Wind Speed	11 mph	12 mph	14 mph	17 mph	21 mph	21 mph	20 mph	19 mph	24 mph	24 mph	24 mph	24 mph	24 mph	21 mph	21 mph	18 mph	17 mph	16 mph	14 mph	13 mph	14 mph	16 mph	16 mph	16 mph	16 mph	16 mph	16 mph	17 mph	17 mph	
Wind Direction	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	S	S	S	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	
Wind Gust	17 mph	18 mph	21 mph	24 mph	28 mph	28 mph	27 mph	40 mph	40 mph	31 mph	31 mph	31 mph	31 mph	28 mph	28 mph	25 mph	24 mph	23 mph	21 mph	19 mph	19 mph	20 mph	20 mph	23 mph	23 mph	23 mph	23 mph	24 mph	24 mph	
Chance of Precipitation	19%	22%	50%	78%	78%	44%	72%	94%	99%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	88%	88%	67%
Weather	Rain Snow	Rain Snow	Rain	Rain	Rain	Rain	Rain	Rain	Rain	Rain	Rain	Rain	Rain	Rain	Rain	Rain	Rain	Rain	Rain	Rain	Rain	Rain	Rain	Rain	Rain	Rain	Rain	Rain	Rain	Rain
Rainfall	0.0 in	0.0 in	0.02 in	0.03 in	0.01 in	0.01 in	0.04 in	0.21 in	0.29 in	0.28 in	0.28 in	0.33 in	0.35 in	0.29 in	0.22 in	0.14 in	0.11 in	0.09 in	0.07 in	0.07 in	0.07 in	0.07 in	0.09 in	0.1 in	0.13 in	0.15 in	0.24 in	0.29 in	0.24 in	0.22 in
Snow Accumulation	0.0 in	0.0 in	0.0 in	0.0 in	0.0 in	0.0 in	0.0 in	0.0 in	0.0 in	0.0 in	0.0 in	0.0 in	0.0 in	0.0 in	0.0 in	0.0 in	0.0 in	0.0 in	0.0 in	0.0 in	0.0 in	0.0 in	0.0 in	0.0 in	0.0 in	0.0 in	0.0 in	0.0 in	0.0 in	0.0 in

Issued: Monday December 11, 2023 04:51 AM AKST

Hazard Level	None	Limited	Elevated	Significant	Extreme
Wind Speed	≤15 mph	15 to 19 mph	20 to 24 mph	25 to 29 mph	≥30 mph
Wind Gust	≤25 mph	25 to 34 mph	35 to 44 mph	45 to 59 mph	≥60 mph
Chance of Precipitation	≤20 %	20 to 39 %	40 to 59 %	60 to 79 %	≥80 %
Rainfall	≤0.1 in	0.1 to 0.29 in	0.3 to 0.79 in	0.8 to 1.09 in	≥1.1 in
Snow Accumulation	≤0.5 in	0.5 to 0.9 in	1.0 to 1.9 in	2.0 to 2.9 in	≥3.0 in

## **Helpful Links**

Alaska Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHSEM)

- <http://ready.alaska.gov/>

National Weather Service: Alaska Forecast Center

- <https://www.weather.gov/alaska/>

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

- <https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/disaster-distress-helpline>