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By Jeremy Zidek

Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management

Media Contact: Jeremy Zidek, 907-428-7077

Governor Dunleavy Issues Disaster Declaration in Response to Imminent Glacial Flood Threat in Juneau

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska — Governor Mike Dunleavy issued a State Disaster Declaration in response to an imminent threat of catastrophic flooding from a glacier lake outburst flood (GLOF) linked to Suicide Basin, a side basin of the Mendenhall Glacier.

The declaration follows a joint local disaster declaration and unified request for assistance submitted by the City and Borough of Juneau and the Central Council of the Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska. This joint action reflects the strong coordination and collaboration between municipal and tribal leadership to protect residents, property, and infrastructure from anticipated impacts.

Hydrologic monitoring by the National Weather Service (NWS) and U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) confirms that the volume of water currently impounded in Suicide Basin has reached or exceeded levels observed during prior flood-of-record events. A release is expected at any time. Flooding is likely to affect the Mendenhall River and surrounding neighborhoods in the Mendenhall Valley.

This year's conditions follow two consecutive years of severe flooding. The August 2024 GLOF caused widespread damage to homes, public infrastructure, and utilities, resulting in state and federal disaster declaration. To mitigate the impact of future flooding Juneau, and the Army Corps of Engineers, have installed more than 2 miles of flood control barriers along the Mendenhall River.

"By issuing this declaration before the flood occurs, we can position state resources and personnel in advance to support local and tribal governments in their efforts to protect lives, homes, and essential services," said Governor Dunleavy. "Our goal is to act early to reduce impacts and preserve community safety."

The State Emergency Operations Center has been activated to support local and tribal efforts. These efforts include interagency coordination, emergency permitting, public messaging, and preparations for protective actions and potential response.

Residents are urged to stay informed and prepared. Official updates and resources are available at and www.juneaufloodhelp.org. Emergency preparedness information can be found at www.ready.alaska.gov.

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Media Contact:

Jeremy Zidek

Public Information Officer

Alaska Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Management

jeremy.zidek@alaska.gov | (907) 428-7083