

STATE CAPITOL
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550 West Seventh Avenue, Suite 1700
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907-269-7450

Governor Mike Dunleavy
STATE OF ALASKA

September 19, 2024

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D. C. 20500

Through: Mr. Willie G. Nunn
Regional Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency, Region X
130 228th Street SW
Bothell, WA 98021-9796

Dear Mr. President:

Under the provisions of Section 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 United States Code §5121-§5207 (Stafford Act), and implemented by Title 44 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) §206.36, I respectfully request that you declare a major disaster authorizing Public Assistance (PA), Individual Assistance (IA), and Hazard Mitigation, as well as necessary administrative and disaster management expenses, for the State of Alaska as a result of a glacier outburst flood that caused severe flooding on August 5-6, 2024, in Juneau, Alaska.

Following record flooding from Mendenhall Glacier's Suicide Basin glacial dam outburst in the City and Borough of Juneau (CBJ), I declared a State disaster emergency on August 6, 2024. This Declaration authorized State disaster assistance for all residents of the CBJ and authorized funds for the State's IA, PA, and Temporary Housing programs, as well as necessary administrative and disaster management expenses. Specific programs under the state-funded IA program included Individual and Family Grants (IFG), Other Needs Assistance (ONA), Housing and Rental Assistance (HA), and Temporary Housing.

Based on the weather summary the National Weather Service Alaska Region (NWS) prepared, the incident period is August 5-6, 2024. I requested an extension under 44 CFR 206.36(a), which

extended the date to submit this request to October 5, 2024. The NWS weather summary is included as Enclosure D.

The State, CBJ, and Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska disaster response and recovery is ongoing, and I am seeking federal disaster assistance for this event.

Background

The flooding in Juneau was caused by a total release from an entire glacier-dammed lake in Suicide Basin next to the Mendenhall Glacier in Juneau. This glacial lake holds an estimated 14.5 billion gallons of water and through remote monitoring was observed full at 1,381 feet on the afternoon of Saturday, August 3, 2024. Remote cameras noted the start of a release on the morning of Sunday, August 4, 2024, showing a significant drop in water levels in Suicide Basin, and NWS issued a Flood Warning that morning. After further analysis, NWS updated the Flood Warning on the afternoon of August 5, 2024, to forecast water levels one foot above the August 2023 disastrous flood of record and revised the timing of the flood crest to early morning Tuesday, August 6, 2024. Based on the updated flood forecast, the Alaska State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC), at the request of the CBJ, issued an Evacuation Order through the Wireless Emergency Alert system on the evening of August 5, 2024, for the forecast flood risk area. That same evening, the Tlingit and Haida Tribe of Alaska issued a similar warning through their public notification system.

The Mendenhall River crested early in the morning of August 6, 2024, at 3:15 AM, exceeding the previous flood of record by one foot, resulting in widespread community flooding. The unprecedented water discharge volume from the glacial basin and the record rate of rise on the river caused widespread rapid residential inundation in hundreds of properties that had never flooded before. Flood water moved “like a strong river” down multiple residential streets, and water pressure was built up in the storm sewer system. This flooded properties in the Mendenhall Valley away from the riverbank. Some residential streets were inundated with over three feet of flood water and an area-wide power outage occurred. Over 500 residents of the Juneau community, including many citizens of the Tlingit and Haida Tribe of Alaska, were impacted. The CBJ reported damage to water treatment systems due to the unprecedented velocity and volume of water.

The CBJ engaged in multiple early morning rescues of trapped residents and opened a shelter. The Tlingit and Haida Tribe of Alaska opened their Emergency Operations Center, deployed responders, and opened a shelter.

The Mendenhall River remained above the flood stage for 28 hours, as water levels dropped rapidly during the day on August 6, 2024, and fell below the flood stage. The NWS canceled the Flood Warning.

Impacted Area

Flooding impacted neighborhoods in the CBJ (2020 census: 31,275), Alaska’s capital city covering over 2,700 square miles and the third largest community in the State. The CBJ is the location of State and federal government operations, Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes, Douglas Indian Association offices, and tourism, fishing, and recreation. The flooding occurred in the Mendenhall River Valley, where most of Juneau’s population resides. It is an area that was

flooded last year by a similar glacial event but otherwise has not historically flooded. The community is off the road system, accessible only by plane, ferry, or boat. The area impacted by this flood includes many low-income homes in Juneau's high-cost-of-living community, elderly residents, and households with school-aged children. The flooded area directly impacted the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska, one of Juneau's largest employers.

State and Local Actions

The SEOC and the State Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) were activated to Preparedness Level 2 (of 4) - *Heightened Awareness* on August 5, 2024, in response to the elevated flood risk for the CBJ. The CBJ was in direct communication with the SEOC throughout the day on August 5, 2024, and issued a flood evacuation warning to the flood risk area through multiple means on the evening of August 5, 2024, and deployed Capitol City Fire and Rescue door-to-door to warn residents in the highest risk areas. Following the CBJ flood evacuation warning, the Tlingit and Haida Tribes of Alaska issued an Everbridge alert to tribal citizens.

Early on August 6, 2024, in response to reports of widespread residential flooding, the CBJ declared a local disaster emergency and provided the SEOC with an initial life-safety assessment. On August 6, 2024, the Tlingit and Haida Tribes of Alaska declared a disaster, activated their Emergency Operations Center, and provided reports to the SEOC. That same August 6th morning, the SEOC elevated to Preparedness Level 3 – *Major Response Ongoing* and began a full State-coordinated inter-agency response to support the CBJ and the Tlingit and Haida Tribe. On August 6, 2024, I declared a State disaster, activating State IA, PA, and Temporary Housing programs.

The glacial outburst caused record flooding along Mendenhall Lake, Mendenhall River, and surrounding subdivisions. An area-wide power outage occurred. The CBJ and the Tlingit and Haida Tribes emergency response included rescues, evacuations, sheltering, emergency route clearance, debris removal, dewatering, traffic control, survivor feeding, emergency supplies, volunteer and donations management, public information, and mass care. Residential flood damage was observed on dozens of residential streets. Flood water reached up to six feet inside some residences, inundated over 290 homes, and damaged drainage facilities, roads, and a pedestrian bridge.

In coordination with the CBJ and the Tlingit and Haida Tribe, the SEOC initiated multi-agency State disaster response operations, including deploying 61 National Guard and Organized Militia responders on State Active Duty, 15 State incident management personnel, State Department of Transportation and Public Facilities debris personnel and equipment, State Department of Environmental Conservation spill responders and solid waste experts, the State National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) Coordinator, and an Emergency Management Assistance Compact Volunteer Agency Liaison from Colorado.

Following widespread evacuations on August 5, 2024, 74 survivors were sheltered in three shelters operated by the CBJ and the Tlingit and Haida Tribe. Following the flooding, 43 households were immediately displaced with unlivable homes, and as of September 3, 2024, 13 households continue to be displaced with their homes unlivable.

The SEOC also initiated the State IA, PA, and Temporary Housing disaster recovery programs, expediting program benefits for survivors whose residences were unlivable. Juneau's isolation from the lower 48 states' road system and the rapid onset of winter continues to challenge survivor recovery.

Request Specifics

This disaster's severity, magnitude and impact meet the following factors outlined in 44 CFR §206.48(6)(a) for PA and IA.

Joint Preliminary Damage Assessment

Local, State, FEMA, and Small Business Administration (SBA) staff conducted a joint preliminary damage assessment (PDA) for IA and PA from August 26, 2024, to September 3, 2024. The joint PA PDA results are discussed below followed by the IA PDA results.

PA PDA:

The PDA validated the following public assistance damages:

Category A	—	\$1,244,977.00 (43.92%)
Category B	—	\$444,761.00 (15.69%)
Category C	—	\$124,595.00 (4.40%)
Category D	—	\$0 (0%)
Category E	—	\$0 (0%)
Category F	—	\$733,265.00 (25.87%)
Category G	—	\$286,746.00 (10.12%)
Total Estimated Cost	—	\$2,834,344.00 (100.00%)

CBJ: \$2,710,249.00 Tlingit and Haida Tribe: \$100,467.00

Category C estimates did not include estimated response and recovery costs eligible under the Federal Highways Administration Emergency Relief to Federal Roads (FHWA) program or the National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Emergency Watershed Program.

Based on PDA results, the State of Alaska has determined the total estimated eligible PA expenses associated with this disaster are currently \$2,834,344, which exceeds the minimum threshold for a federal major disaster declaration in Alaska. The minimum statewide per capita threshold required by the Stafford Act of \$1,349,440 is calculated by multiplying 733,391 Alaska residents (2020 Census) by the Federal Fiscal Year 2024 (FY2024) per capita indicator of \$1.84.

The total PA costs for the CBJ are \$2,710,249, above the countywide threshold of \$143,865, calculated by multiplying 31,275 (2020 Census) CBJ residents by the FY2024 per capita indicator of \$4.60.

IA PDA:

The Joint IA PDA determined the following residential damages using FEMA's Damage Assessment Matrix in the CBJ: 57 major, 69 minor and 136 affected. The joint IA PDA estimated federal costs at \$1,511,609.62 in HA and \$3,132,000 in ONA for a total federal cost of \$4,643,609.62. The state cost share for ONA would be \$1,044,000. Total HA and ONA would be \$5,687,609.62.

The PDA determined that 91.22 percent of the residences impacted were owner-occupied (239), 17.50 percent had flood insurance, and 22.50 percent were low-income.

The IA PDA used initial damage assessment information compiled from local officials, private and public building inspections, Red Cross of Alaska damage assessments, state IA applications, and damage assessment from the Tlingit and Haida Tribe to determine the CBJ properties to assess during the PDA.

The SBA evaluated homes and businesses to determine if the criteria for a physical and/or Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) were met. The SBA evaluated 64 homes with major damage and 239 with minor damage for a total of \$4,348,000 in residential loss. The SBA evaluated four businesses or non-profits with major damage and 21 with minor damage for \$790,000 in losses. This reaches the SBA threshold for physical damage and EIDL declaration.

State IA Impacts:

I have activated the State IA recovery program under my state disaster authority and ask that you please consider the following state information in your review of the overall impact of this disaster on the State, the CBJ and the Tlingit and Haida Tribes.

Starting August 7, 2024, the day after the flood, my team opened an online application and toll-free hotline for State IA disaster assistance registration for impacted residents. On August 14, 2024, the State opened two in-person disaster assistance centers for State disaster assistance registration and individual survivor support, one in the CBJ facilities and one in the Tlingit and Haida Tribal facilities. Applications are still being taken, and damages are verified. As of September 3, 2024, the State is processing over \$374,870 in grants for ONA, IA, HA, and Temporary Housing and has received over 235 applications.

While policy coverage under the NFIP increased by 23 percent following the 2023 Juneau flood, only 17.50 percent of the impacted residences had flood insurance. Even survivors with flood insurance reported unmet needs following NFIP coverage processing.

Direct residential structure damages resulting from the flooding include basements, garages and ground-level floors of homes that will require replacement wall and flooring components, electrical systems and appliances. The acute housing shortage in Juneau severely challenged temporary housing options for survivors, so many continue to live in homes with only stud framing on the first floor. The rapid onset of severe winter weather in Juneau makes survivor housing repairs urgent.

In addition, individual property losses from the flood include damaged subsistence hunting, fishing, gathering, and processing equipment, freezers, food, vehicles, boats, and other critical and culturally significant items in flooded homes, garages, and other outbuildings. Floodwaters, filled with debris and silt, challenged cleanup efforts. Many residential heating appliances were submerged in flood waters and firewood was lost reducing available heating at the onset of winter.

Some survivors lost their work tools, while others lost tools used for harvesting and processing subsistence foods. Also lost were tools used for production of traditional items of spiritual and cultural significance. Many survivors lost wages as they missed work trying to make their homes livable following the flood.

Survivors also lost subsistence foods, including large quantities of salmon, elk, berries, black seaweed, and other wild foods. Fuel contamination in homes and garages, where food is often stored and processed, has further compounded this loss. These traditional foods, which are culturally significant and integral to the community's way of life, cannot be replaced this year due to the seasonal nature of the harvest. The loss of these resources has created a ripple effect, as extended families who depend on shared food supplies now face heightened financial hardship due to the extreme cost of store-bought food in Juneau.

The State IA program sets a maximum award of \$21,250 (half of the federal award) for ONA and up to 18 months of Temporary Housing based on the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development Fair Market Value per household size. The anticipated uninsured loss to homes from this disaster will exceed this. Under the provision of state-only disaster relief for homeowners, many survivors will have insufficient funds to recover from this disaster. Federal disaster assistance is requested to assist with long-term recovery from this flood. If a federal IA declaration is made, state recovery actions will be coordinated with federal actions.

Voluntary Agency Assistance

From the beginning of the flood response, the State's Mass Care Group, in coordination with the CBJ, the Tlingit and Haida Tribe and multiple volunteer agencies engaged in mass care support to survivors. Mass care operations included sheltering, food, clothing, financial assistance, housing assistance, dewatering, flood clean-up work, disaster mental health, spiritual care, household items, school supplies and public/private sector volunteer and donation coordination.

The voluntary agencies involved included the Red Cross, Salvation Army, Alaska Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters, United Way, Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Tribes, Team Rubicon, Southern Baptists, Mennonite Disaster Services, and other faith-based and charity organizations. Home Depot, Alaska Airlines and other private-sector companies donated supplies, transportation, personnel and equipment. To date, volunteer agencies engaged in the Juneau flood response have provided over 2,000 volunteer hours, deployed over 450 volunteers and delivered thousands of dollars in monetary, service and goods assistance to survivors.

Hundreds of local Juneau community residents coordinated through a volunteer center operated by the CBJ and the United Way volunteered to assist survivors with recovery from the flood.

The Mass Care Group's work is ongoing to address unmet needs and support long-term recovery. It includes faith-based responders from out of state traveling into Juneau on state-paid invitational travel.

Public Health Impacts

There were no serious life-threatening injuries or deaths reported from August's Juneau Glacier flood, but some survivors were rescued by boat and some reported "swimming" through flood water to safety. Others reported that, while they were rescued, their pets and livestock perished. One survivor died while cleaning their property, and this became widely known in the community.

Many homeowners with major flood damage are still working to make their homes livable, while some have been unable to start repairs due to financial constraints. In addition, one group home and one childcare center were damaged in the flood, impacting vulnerable populations.

Following the flooding, public health concerns from survivors included contaminated floodwaters, sewage backups, mold, asbestos, petroleum spills and odors, contaminated foodstuffs and gardens, and flood-damaged home appliances, reducing the ability to refrigerate or cook. Two residential fires were reported when the residential utility service was returned following the flood.

The flood loss of tools used to gather subsistence foods or create cultural items caused a profound spiritual, cultural, and financial setback for the tribal community in the flood area. Ongoing shelter operations and responder lodging in the Tlingit and Haida Tribe Elizabeth Peratrovich Hall caused the cancelation of pre-scheduled cultural events. The Tlingit and Haida Tribe also redirected hundreds of employees to flood response and recovery, leading to the cancelation or delay of numerous events, contracts and regular programs.

The flood prolonged the closure of the Mendenhall Visitors Center, Juneau's most popular tourist destination, operated jointly by the United States Forest Service and the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska. This caused a loss of income and cultural connection.

In addition, the immediate evacuation order, rapidly rising record flood waters, widespread inundation of residences, and the occurrence of destructive record glacier floods, two years in a row on the same date, resulted in ongoing severe community anxiety. Among those with anxiety from the flood are many school-aged children, and 34 tribal households have children in the impacted area, all in the special flood hazard area. Additionally, the fear of future glacial outburst floods with little warning and the complete lack of any immediate mitigation measures continues to stress the community and generate mental health concerns.

Alaska Disaster History

The State of Alaska continues to manage recovery from multiple concurrent disasters. Since November 2018, there have been 36 State disasters, with ten of these disasters further approved for federal disaster assistance. For events that receive presidential disaster declarations, the State covers the full 25 percent cost share requirement, and all other costs are 100 percent funded through State disaster relief funds. The estimated total amount of State disaster costs over the

past ten years now exceeds \$290 million.

State Declarations

Over the last 12 months, there have been ten State-declared disasters in Alaska, with two of these disasters further approved for federal disaster assistance. State disasters over the last year include 2024 June Stebbins Fire, 2024 Spring Floods, 2024 April South Tongass Fire Station Fire, 2024 April Kivalina Structure Fire, 2024 Kotzebue Waterline Freeze, 2023 December Quinhagak Power Outage, 2023 Diomide Building Collapse, 2023 November Wrangell Landslide, 2023 Talkeetna Flood, 2023 August Juneau Glacier Flood.

Federal Declarations

Recent federal disasters are described below. Each federal disaster has a corresponding state declaration.

- **2023 November Wrangell and Prince of Wales Landslide and Flooding**
On November 21, 2023, I declared a state disaster emergency for the City and Borough of Wrangell following a southeast weather system that triggered a landslide across the Zimovia Highway at milepost 11 that caused six fatalities, destroyed three homes, cut-off road and electricity access to seventy-five homes, and required prolonged ongoing search and rescue for the missing, evacuation and sheltering, debris removal, and emergency geological survey. On December 11, 2023, following reports of additional landslides and flooding on Prince of Wales Island, I expanded the state declaration to all of Prince of Wales Island. I requested a federal IA and PA major disaster declaration for these areas and while the IA request was denied, a PA major declaration was approved four months later, on April 6, 2024 (DR-4767). The Joint Field Office for this disaster remains open and recovery is ongoing.
- **2023 Spring Flood**
On May 13, 2023, as prolonged cold weather was followed by a rapid warm-up, I declared a State Disaster Emergency for the Alaska Gateway, Yukon Flats, Copper River, and Kuskpuk Regional Education Attendance Area (REAA) in response to record flooding from ice jams and rapid snowmelt that impacted multiple communities and infrastructure. The Declaration activated the State's PA, IA, and temporary housing programs. As the flooding continued, I amended the Declaration to include the Northwest Arctic Borough, City of Galena, the Iditarod, Lower Kuskokwim, Lower Yukon, and Yukon Koyukuk REAAs communities for all State disaster programs, and the Bering Strait REAA, Fairbanks North Star, and North Slope Boroughs for state PA. At my request, on August 23, 2023, you declared a major disaster for PA and IA (DR-4730). Recovery operations for this disaster continue.
- **2022 September West Coast Storm**
The State of Alaska experienced an exceptionally strong and widespread coastal storm (remnant of Typhoon Merbok) September 15-20, 2022, that affected 40 communities along a 1,300-mile-long area of Alaska's west coast. The SEOC coordinated a full state and federal response and recovery effort including evacuations and sheltering of 500 residents and on September 17, 2022, I declared a State Disaster (AK 22-290) for the 2022 September West Coast Storm that authorized state PA and IA. At my request, you declared a major disaster declaration (DR 4672-AK) on September 23, 2022, for IA and PA. The PDA

validated over \$28 million in public assistance damages alone and by November 2022 FEMA had dispersed over \$11.3 million in IFG, HA, and ONA funds to survivors. Due to the proximity of the disaster to winter and a short construction season, emergency interim residence repairs were done. Recovery operations from this disaster continue.

- 2022 Lowell Point Landslide

On May 7, 2022, a large landslide cut off all road access to the Community of Lowell Point, outside the City of Seward and within the Kenai Peninsula Borough (KPB). The slide isolated residents and tourists from road access to all essential services and required emergency marine transport operations. The City issued a local disaster declaration on May 7, 2022, the KPB issued a declaration on May 13, 2022, and I declared a State PA disaster (AK 22-284) the same day. A joint PDA determined eligible PA costs exceeding \$1.322 million and on July 26, 2022, you declared a major disaster (FEMA 4661-AK).

- 2022 Matanuska-Susitna Borough/Copper River REAA Windstorm

On January 1, 2022, a strong storm brought extreme cold weather and sustained strong winds to the Matanuska-Susitna Borough (MSB) and Copper River Basin. The highest windspeed was 91 mph with wind chills down to 40 degrees below zero. Impacts from this storm included multi-day power disruption to over 18,000 MSB residents, windblown storm debris, overturned vehicles, downed trees, and wind/freeze damage to structures. On January 3, 2022, the MSB declared a local disaster and on January 3, 2022, I declared a State PA and IA disaster (AK 21-278) for the 2021/2022 Statewide Alaska Winter Storms. A joint PDA for PA determined eligible PA at \$2.77 million and on March 14, 2022, you declared a federal PA disaster (FEMA 4646-DR). On March 16, 2022, the SBA declared an EIDL (AK-17372-01) for the FEMA 4646-DR disaster within MSB.

- 2021 Interior Alaska Storms

A strong winter storm impacted the Alaska Interior on December 25-27, 2021. The storm produced extreme cold temperatures, strong winds, wind chills to 45 degrees below zero, record freezing rain (resulting in ice accumulation), and heavy snowfall. Impacts included downed power lines, widespread power outages involving over 14,000 residents, road closures and structural damage across much of Interior Alaska. On January 3, 2022, I declared a State IA and PA disaster (AK 21-278) for the Fairbanks North Star, Matanuska-Susitna, and Denali Boroughs, the City of Nenana, and the Delta/Greely and Copper River REAA. A joint PDA determined PA costs at \$1,589,063 and on March 24, 2022, you declared a major disaster for PA (FEMA 4648-DR).

- 2021 Southcentral Alaska Storm

From October 29 through November 1, 2021, an “atmospheric river” storm system brought heavy rain, snow, and strong winds to much of Southcentral Alaska. Rainfall reached recurrence intervals that ranged from a one-in-25-year record to a one-in-1,000-year record event. In response on November 30, 2021, I declared a State PA disaster (AK 21-276) for the KPB and later amended this declaration to include the Municipality of Anchorage (MOA). A joint PDA determined \$2.83 million in PA damages. You declared a federal major disaster (DR 4638-AK) for PA on January 15, 2022.

- 2020 Southeast Alaska Storm

From November 30 through December 2, 2020, a coastal storm with record rainfall triggered landslides, mudslides, and flooding across Southeast Alaska. The storm produced a landslide in Haines on December 2, 2020, that swept away two homes and two people who are still missing and presumed dead. I declared a State PA disaster (AK 20-272) on December 5, 2020, and amended this declaration to include IA and temporary housing assistance on December 29. A joint PDA determined \$24 million in PA damages, and you declared a major disaster for PA (DR 4585-AK) on February 17, 2021.

- 2018 November Cook Inlet Earthquake

On November 30, 2018, a 7.1 magnitude earthquake located seven miles north of Anchorage produced very strong seismic shaking causing widespread damage within MOA, MSB, and KPB. The earthquake damaged roads, bridges, and railroad tracks; caused widespread power, water, and communication disruptions; caused structural collapse and fires in buildings; and severely damaged hundreds of structures. My predecessor, Governor Bill Walker, declared a State PA and IA disaster for the three jurisdictions that day. The President declared an emergency declaration (EM-3410-AK) that day as well as a major disaster (DR 4413-AK) on January 30, 2019. To date, the State of Alaska has obligated almost \$23.3 million in State IA, PA, and temporary housing compensation. This event remains the largest disaster to affect Alaska since the Great Alaska M9.2 Earthquake in March 1964.

In total, the State is actively engaged in the management of 38 State-declared disasters and 16 federally declared disasters.

Conclusion

I have determined this incident is of such severity and magnitude that effective recovery is beyond the capabilities of the State and affected local governments; therefore, supplementary federal assistance is needed.

I specifically request you declare a major disaster to include PA and IA programs for eligible applicants within the CBJ and State of Alaska agencies, along with statewide Hazard Mitigation.

I believe the nature of this disaster, along with the severe long-term impact, compels an expedited review of this RFA and timely consideration of the information provided.

I certify the State of Alaska will assume all applicable non-federal shares of costs required by the Stafford Act.

I have designated Al Cavallo, Alaska Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management's Disaster Assistance Program Manager, as the State Coordinating Officer for this request. He will work with FEMA to review our joint PDAs and provide further information or justification on my behalf.

I also concur with the recommendation of the President of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska to designate Sabrina Grubitz as the Tribal Coordinating Officer for this incident.

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
September 19, 2024
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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mike Dunleavy", with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Mike Dunleavy
Governor

Enclosure(s): FEMA RFA Form 010-0-13

- A: Individual Assistance
- B: Public Assistance
- C: Estimated Assistance from Other Federal Agencies
- D. National Weather Service Weather Summary
- E. Central Council of the Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska Letter

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
Federal Emergency Management Agency
REQUEST FOR PRESIDENTIAL DISASTER DECLARATION
MAJOR DISASTER OR EMERGENCY

OMB Control Number 1660-0009

Expires 06/30/2023

1. Request Date Sep 13, 2024

Burden Disclosure Notice

Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 9 hours per response. The burden estimate includes the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and submitting the form. This collection of information is required to obtain a benefit. You are not required to respond to this collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. Send comments regarding the accuracy of the burden estimate and any suggestions for reducing the burden to: Information Collections Management, Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency, 500 C Street SW, Washington, DC 20472, Paperwork Reduction Project (1660-0009). **NOTE: Do not send your completed form to this address.**

Completion of this form including applicable attachments satisfies legal requirements for emergency and major disaster declaration requests under 42 U.S.C. §§ 5170 and 5191, respectively, as implemented at 44 C.F.R. §§ 206.35 and 206.36. Failure to use this form may result in a failure to meet these requirements and/or a delay in processing the request.

2a. Name of State (as defined in Stafford Act 102, 42 U.S.C. § 5122) or Indian tribal government requesting declaration.

State of Alaska

2b. Population (as reported by 2010 Census) or estimated population of Indian tribal government's damaged area(s). 733,391

3. Governor's or Tribal Chief Executive's Name

Mike Dunleavy

4. Designation of State or Tribal Coordinating Officer upon declaration (if available) and phone number

Al Cavallo 907.428.7051

5. Designation of Governor's Authorized Representative or Tribal Chief Executive Representative upon declaration (if available) and phone number

Bryan Fisher, Division Director, 907.428.7096

6. Declaration Request For: ☒ Major Disaster (Stafford Act Sec. 401)

☐ Emergency (Stafford Act Sec. 501 (a))

7. Incident Period: Beginning Date Aug 5, 2024 End Date Aug 6, 2024 or ☐ Continuing

If requesting a "continuing" incident period, enclose an official statement from a qualified Federal Government agency acknowledged as a national authority in a specific incident field (e.g., United States Geological Survey for seismic incidents, the National Weather Service for flooding).

7b. Type of Incident (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Drought ☐ Earthquake ☐ Explosion ☐ Fire ☒ Flood ☐ Hurricane ☐ Landslide ☐ Mudslide
☐ Severe Storm ☐ Snowstorm
☐ (rain, high water, wind-driven, rain, hail, lightning) ☐ (Must include Enclosure D: Historic and Current Snowfall Data) ☐ Straight-Line Winds
☐ Tidal Wave ☐ Tornado ☐ Tropical Depression ☐ Tropical Storm ☐ Tsunami ☐ Volcanic Eruption ☐ Winter Storm
☐ Other (please specify) _____

8. Description of damages (Short description of impacts of disaster on affected area and population). Include additional details in enclosed Governor's or Tribal Chief Executive's cover letter.

The flooding in Juneau was caused by a near total release from the glacier dammed lake that is in Suicide Basin next to the Mendenhall Glacier. Flood waters were 1 foot above the flood of record (2023). Flooding occurred along Mendenhall Lake, Mendenhall River, and in surrounding subdivisions. City and Borough of Juneau and Tlingit and Haida Tribe emergency response included rescues, evacuations, sheltering, emergency route clearance, debris removal, traffic control, survivor feeding and mass care. Flooding was reported in over 250 residences with flood water reaching up to five feet in some residential structures. The response and recovery from the flooding is ongoing.

9. Description of the nature and amount of State and local or Indian tribal government resources which have been or will be committed. Include additional details in enclosed Governor's or Tribal Chief Executive's cover letter.

The State of Alaska declared a disaster emergency on August 6, 2024, authorizing funding for the state's individual, public, and temporary housing disaster assistance programs, as well as necessary administrative and disaster management expenses. The state will provide the full 25% non-federal cost share for this disaster as well as any recovery costs not eligible for reimbursement. The Tlingit and Haida Tribe of Alaska declared a disaster, opened their Emergency Operations Center, and engaged in a full response. The City and Borough of Juneau declared a local disaster and engaged in a full response.

10. Joint Preliminary Damage Assessment*

☒ Individual Assistance Dates Performed **Requested** Aug 13, 2024 **Start** Aug 26, 2024 **End** Sep 3, 2024

Individual Assistance Accessibility Problems (Areas that could not be accessed, and why)
N/A

☒ Public Assistance Dates Performed **Requested** Aug 13, 2024 **Start** Aug 26, 2024 **End** Sep 3, 2024

Public Assistance Accessibility Problems (Areas that could not be accessed, and why)
N/A

11. Programs and Areas Requested

Individual Assistance ☐ N/A ☐ Individuals and Households Program ☐ Crisis Counseling Program ☐ Disaster Unemployment Assistance
☒ All ☐ Disaster Case Management ☐ Disaster Legal Services ☐ Small Business Administration (SBA) Disaster Assistance

For the following jurisdictions, specify programs and areas (counties, parishes, independent cities; for Indian tribal government, list tribe(s) and/or tribal area(s)) If additional space is needed, please enclose additional documentation).
City and Borough of Juneau. The State of Alaska also requests SBA disaster assistance for eligible homes and businesses in the impacted jurisdiction.

For States, identify Federally-recognized Tribes in the requested counties (if applicable).
Central Council of the Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes, Douglas Indian Association

Please see **Enclosure A: Supplemental Information for Individual Assistance** for additional information in support of this request*.

*Not Required for Emergency Declaration Request

11. Programs and Areas Requested (Continued)

Public Assistance	☐ N/A	☒ Debris Removal (Category A)	☒ Emergency Protective Measures (Category B)	☒ Permanent Work (Categories C-G)* (not available for Emergency Declaration Requests)
For the following jurisdictions, specify programs and areas (counties, parishes, independent cities; for Indian tribal government, list tribe(s) and/or tribal area(s)). If additional space is needed or your request includes different categories of work for different jurisdictions; please enclose additional documentation. City and Borough of Juneau				
For States, identify Federally-recognized Tribes included in the requested counties (if applicable). Central Council of the Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes, Douglas Indian Association				
Please see Enclosure B: Supplemental Information for Public Assistance for additional information in support of this request*.				
Indemnification for Debris Removal Activity				
☐ I do not anticipate the need for debris removal. I anticipate the need for debris removal, which poses an immediate threat to lives, public health and safety. Pursuant to Sections 403 and 407 of the Stafford Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 5170b & 5173, the State or Indian tribal government agrees to indemnify and hold ☒ harmless the United States of America for any claims arising from the removal of debris or wreckage for this disaster. The State or Indian tribal government agrees that debris removal from public and private property will not occur until the landowner signs an unconditional authorization for the removal of debris.				
Request for Direct Federal Assistance				
☒ I do not request direct Federal assistance at this time. ☐ I request direct Federal assistance for work and services to save lives and protect property, and: a. I request the following type(s) of assistance: b. List of reasons why State and local or Indian tribal government cannot perform, or contract for, required work and services. c. In accordance with 44 C.F.R. § 206.208, the State or Indian tribal government agrees that it will, with respect to direct Federal assistance: (1) Provide without cost to the United States all lands, easements, and rights-of-ways necessary to accomplish the approved work; (2) Hold and save the United States free from damages due to the requested work, and shall indemnify the Federal Government against any claims arising from such work; (3) Provide reimbursement to FEMA for the non-Federal share of the cost of such work in accordance with the provisions of the FEMA-State or FEMA-Tribe Agreement ; and (4) Assist the performing Federal agency in all support and local jurisdictional matters.				
Request for Snow Assistance				
☒ N/A ☐ I request snow assistance.				
Snow assistance for the following jurisdictions (Specify counties, independent cities or tribes and/or tribal areas). 				
Please see Enclosure D: Historic and Current Snowfall Data for additional information in support of this request*.				
*Not Required for Emergency Declaration Request				

11. Programs and Areas Requested (Continued)

Hazard Mitigation* ☒ Statewide OR

For the following specific counties, parishes, independent cities or tribes and/or tribal areas.
City and Borough of Juneau, Tlingit and Haida Tribe of Alaska

12. Mitigation Plan Information*

a. Mitigation Plan Expiration Date October 22, 2028 b. Type of Plan ☐ Enhanced ☒ Standard

13. Other Federal Agency Programs

☒ I do not anticipate requirements from Other Federal Agencies ☐ I do anticipate requirements from Other Federal Agencies

Please see **Enclosure C**: Requirements for Other Federal Agency Programs for additional information in support of this request*.

14. Findings and Certifications

☒ I certify the following:

a. I have determined that this incident is of such severity and magnitude that effective response is beyond the capabilities of the State and the affected local government or Indian tribal government and that supplementary federal assistance is necessary.

b. In response to this incident, I have taken appropriate action under State or tribal law and have directed the execution of the State or Tribal Emergency Plan on Aug 6, 2024 in accordance with the Stafford Act.

c. The State and local governments, or Indian tribal government will assume all applicable non-Federal share of costs required by the Stafford Act.

15. List of Enclosures and Supporting Documentation

☒ Cover Letter ☒ Enclosure A (Individual Assistance)* ☒ Enclosure B (Public Assistance)*
☒ Enclosure C (Requirements for Other Federal Agency Programs) ☐ Enclosure D (Historic and Current Snowfall Data)
☒ Additional Supporting Documentation National Weather Service Weather Summary



 Governor's or Tribal Chief Executive's Signature

9/19/24

 Date

If anyone except the Governor or Tribal Chief Executive signs this document, please provide the documentation that establishes that this individual has the legal authority to act on behalf of the Governor or Tribal Chief Executive.

*Not Required for Emergency Declaration Request

ENCLOSURE A TO MAJOR DISASTER REQUEST

Estimated Requirements for Individual Assistance under the Stafford Act based on PDA Results
*Other Needs Assistance is subject to a 75% federal/25% state cost share. Only the total estimated federal share amount is shown in this column.

**Includes Disaster
Unemployment
Assistance, Legal
Services, and Crisis
Counseling

Community / Borough	Temporary Housing	Repairs	Replacement	Other Needs Assistance*	Other Programs**
CBJ - Total	\$401,952.60	\$1,109,657.02	\$0	\$3,132,000	TBD

ENCLOSURE B TO MAJOR DISASTER REQUEST

Estimate Stafford Act Requirements for Public Assistance under the Stafford Act based on PDA Results

Community/ Borough	Category							Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	
CBJ - Total	\$ 1,244,977	\$ 444,761	\$ 124,595	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 733,265	\$ 286,746	
PERCENTAGE	43.92%	15.69%	4.40%	0%	0%	25.87%	10.12%	100.00 %

A - Debris Removal
B - Emergency Protective Measures
C - Roads & Bridges
D - Water Control Facilities
E - Buildings & Equipment
F - Utilities
G - Other (Parks, Recreational Facilities & other items)

ENCLOSURE C TO MAJOR DISASTER REQUEST

Estimated Assistance from Other Federal Agencies

Community/ Borough	SBA HOME LOANS	SBA BUSINESS LOANS	FSA LOANS	NRCS	FHWA (Not included in Enclosure B)	USACE	US BIA
CBJ	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD

FHWA – Federal Highway Administration

FSA – Farm Service Agency

NRCS – National Resource Conservation Service

SBA – Small Business Administration

TBD – To be determined. Values provided where known.

USACE – United States Army Corps of Engineers

US BIA – United States Bureau of Indian Affairs

ENCLOSURE D TO MAJOR DISASTER REQUEST

Please see attached National Weather Service Summary



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE ALASKA REGION
222 West 7th Avenue, #23
Anchorage, Alaska 99513-7575

August 16, 2024

Juneau/Mendenhall River Flooding

Suicide Basin Glacier Dammed Lake Release

Aaron Jacobs, Senior Service Hydrologist, WFO Juneau

Nicole Ferrin, Warning Coordination Meteorologist, WFO Juneau

Celine van Breukelen, Service Coordination Hydrologist, Alaska-Pacific River Forecast Center

Carrie Haisley, Chief, Emergency Services and Multimedia Branch

Overview

A glacial dam outburst flood (GLOF) occurred in the Mendenhall Valley, approximately 10 miles northwest of downtown Juneau, on August 5-6, 2024. The flood originated from [Suicide Basin](#) (Map #1), a side basin located less than one mile from the terminus of the Mendenhall Glacier. Suicide Basin was once filled with ice from Suicide Glacier, but as the glacier has receded, ice is no longer deposited into the basin. Now, water from annual snowmelt, ice melt, and rainfall fills the basin. In addition to a calving face of the glacier that holds back water in the basin, floating icebergs from ice calving off the main trunk of the Mendenhall Glacier further complicate the understanding of this dynamic system, along with other factors.

Suicide Basin fills up annually and has drained multiple times per year, with some events producing minor or moderate flooding impacts and others producing no impacts along Mendenhall Lake and River. The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) stream gauge was installed in 1965. There were no documented impactful glacier outburst events recorded by the stream gauge until July 2011. The Mendenhall Glacier and River system has experienced approximately 39 glacial-dammed lake release events since July 2011. Release volumes of GLOFs vary considerably. Many releases are relatively small, less than 10,000 AC-FT. Three releases, occurring in 2016, 2020, and 2022, were between 24,500 and 29,000 AC-FT. On August 5, 2023, Suicide Basin nearly fully drained, releasing approximately 44,500 AC-FT and causing the Mendenhall River to reach a new record crest of 14.97 FT (gauge datum). This August, the basin fully drained again, releasing a preliminary amount of approximately 49,000 AC-FT and causing the Mendenhall River to set yet another preliminary record crest of 15.99 FT (gauge datum), almost a foot higher than last year. The 2023 and 2024 releases were so much larger than the previous releases because the basin drained nearly completely in



Map #1: Map of Mendenhall Valley with downtown Juneau to the SE of this image



these two cases; prior releases only accounted for a portion of the basin's dammed volume. GLOF release volumes are based on measured flow at the [Mendenhall River USGS stream gauge](#) located in Mendenhall Lake.

This year, Suicide Basin filled to the top of the Mendenhall Glacier on August 1st, reaching a maximum pool height of approximately 1,381 FT (gauge datum) and began to flow over the side drainage channel. On the morning of Sunday, August 4th, Suicide Basin began dropping quickly as the drainage started subglacially, and Mendenhall Lake slowly began to respond, causing a Flood Warning to be issued by the NWS's Juneau Weather Forecast Office (WFO). The pre-GLOF release stage at the Mendenhall Lake gauge was approximately 5 FT (gauge datum), rising to minor flood stage of 9 FT by August 5th at 9:15 AM, moderate flood stage of 10 FT by August 5 at 12 PM, major flood stage of 14 ft by August 5th at 9 PM, cresting at 15.99 FT on August 6 at 3:15 AM, and falling back to a baseflow of 5.7 FT by the afternoon of August 7th. The Mendenhall River remained above flood stage for approximately 28 hours.

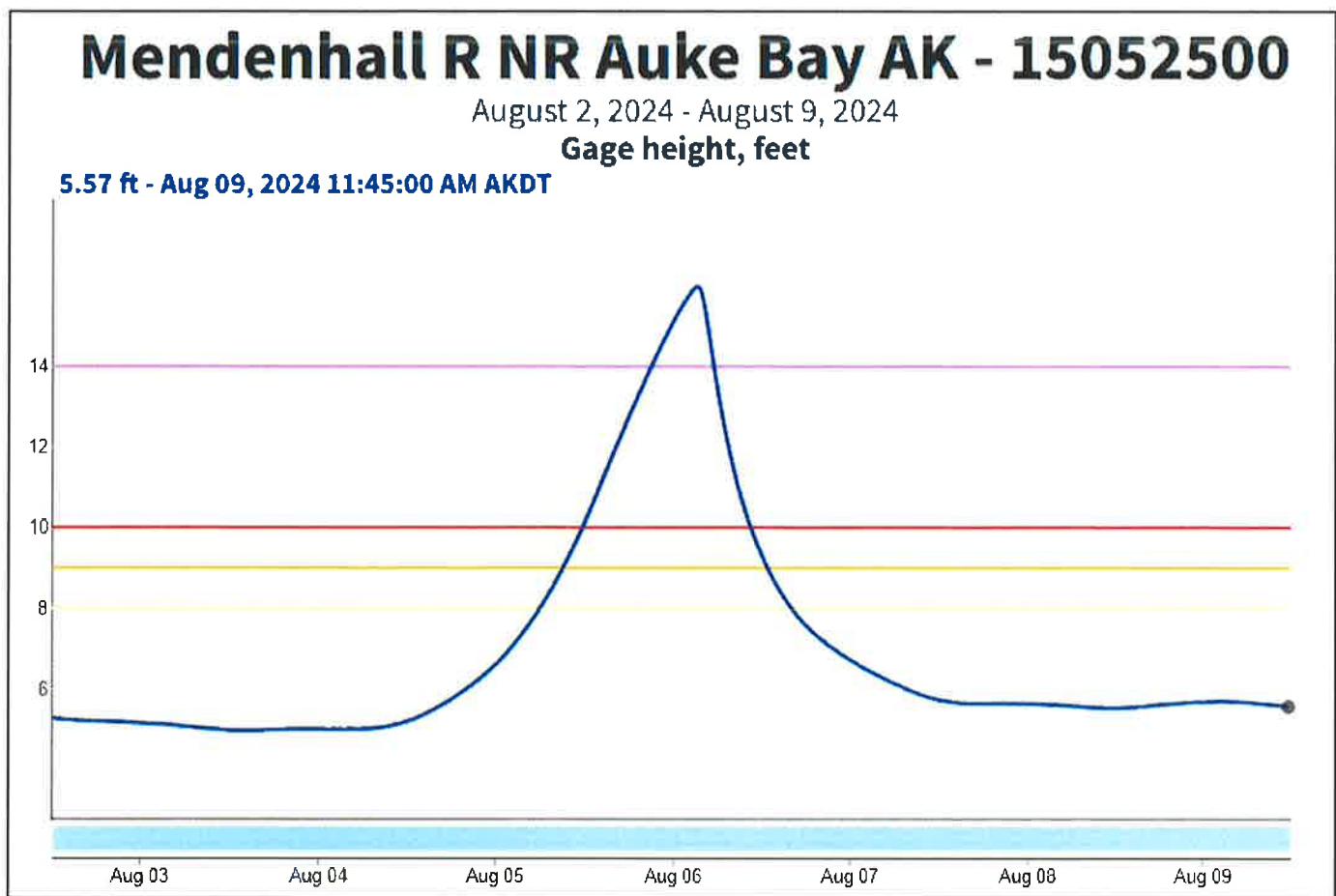
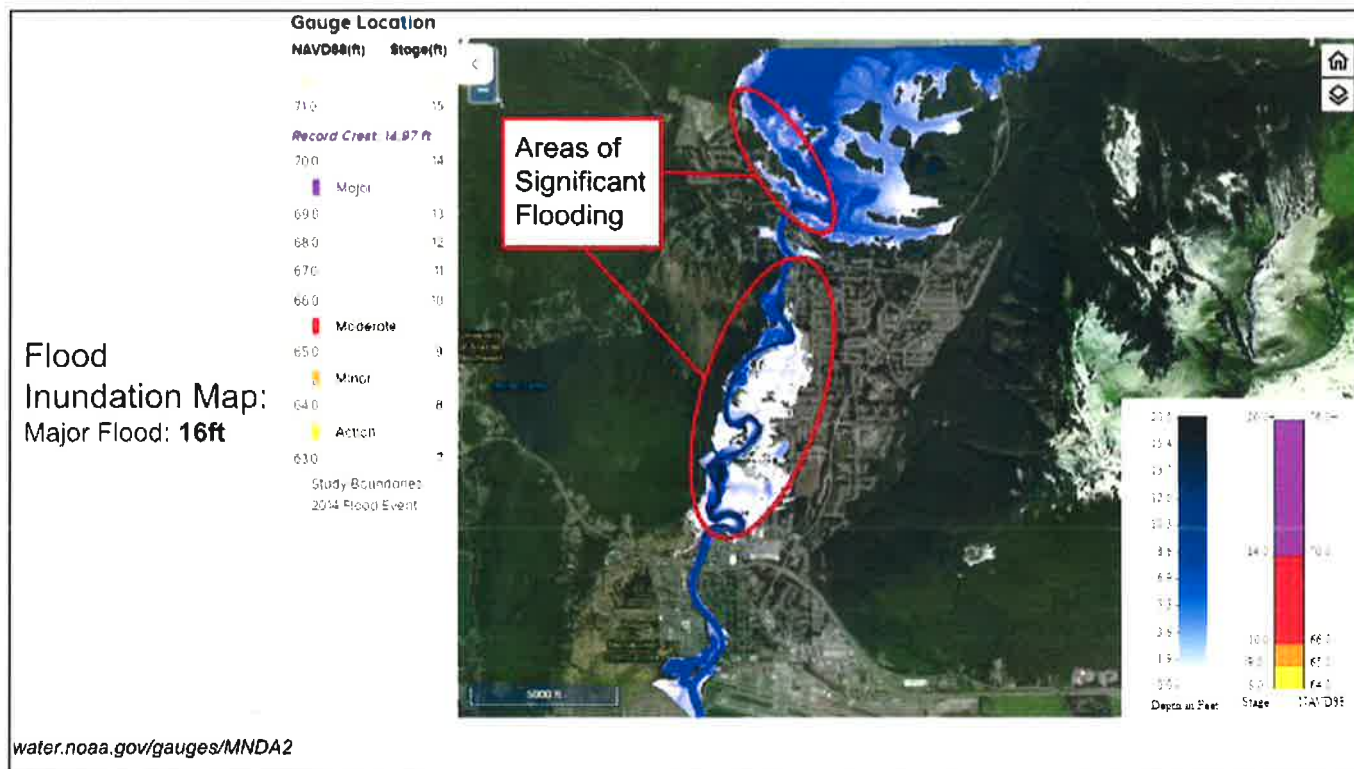


Figure #1: Hydrograph of the Mendenhall River pulled from the USGS website. The river was above minor flood stage of 9 FT from approximately August 5th at 9 AM to August 6th at 1 PM.

This record event produced flooding along Mendenhall Lake and River that has not been seen in the past. Multiple areas experienced major flooding with about 290 homes being impacted with some seeing 4 to 6 FT of water in them.



Map #2: Map of Mendenhall Valley overlaid with the 16 FT Flood Inundation Map developed in 2014 showing widespread flooding over the Mendenhall Valley west of Riverside Drive, along View Drive, and around the Mendenhall Lake impacting Forest Service infrastructure.

River Flooding

The flood on the Mendenhall River from August 5-6, 2024, was caused by the release of a glacial-dammed lake adjacent to the Mendenhall Glacier. The preliminary peak stage was 15.99 FT (gauge datum), measured at the USGS stream gauge. The preliminary estimate of the release volume for this event is approximately 49,000 AC-FT. The previous record peak stage was 14.97 FT (gauge datum) on August 5, 2023, during last year's near-full Suicide Basin release. The record major flooding from this event was a result of the volume that came out of the basin at one time and the rate of rise. From Monday morning to the crest early Tuesday morning, the rate of rise on the river was around 0.4 FT per hour. The rate of rise was faster this year than last year, which could be due to a more efficient subglacial conduit drainage system, primed by a previous atmospheric river.

The total water level rise at the USGS Mendenhall Lake gauge from the onset of the glacier-dammed lake release to the peak was around 11 FT and occurred over 36 hours. The rate of rise of Mendenhall Lake and the Mendenhall River, which flows six miles from Mendenhall Lake into Fritz Cove, was similar to the event almost exactly a year ago; however, the peak stage this year was one foot higher. These two large GLOF events were unprecedented compared to GLOFs before August 2023. The preliminary peak discharge from this event at the Mendenhall Lake gauge was 33,400 cubic FT per second (CFS) versus the 26,000 CFS crest last year and the 16,300 CFS record from July 2016. The outburst event increased discharge into Mendenhall Lake and River by approximately 30,500 CFS.

The flooding impacts were much worse in some areas but less severe in others. This was due to two factors:

1. The section of the river above the Back Loop Bridge was able to hold more water within its banks. This was due to large amounts of “river scouring” from last year's event, and the high water marks along the south side of View Drive were about 6 inches lower than last year (which saved one house from flood damage). Meanwhile, residents on the north side of View Drive experienced more water flowing across their property, causing increased road and home damage.
2. The amount of water that flowed over Killewich Drive was much higher than last year, causing water to move like a strong river down Riverside Drive and Killewich into Emily Way, Sharon Street, Gee Street, Long Run, and Northland—areas that had not seen such flooding before. Additionally, the water that came over into Meander Way was also much greater than last year. Residents in those areas saw water not just coming from the river to the west but also from the north, as water made its way through the community from Killewich. This water produced major flooding impacts, with 1 to 4 FT of water in homes, causing significant damage.

As the floodwaters moved through homes west of Riverside Drive, the water flowed down Rivercourt Way and returned to the Mendenhall River. After the Mendenhall River breached the banks around Marion Drive, Riverside Drive, Killewich Drive, and Meander Way, it entered the storm sewer drains but could not flow into the Mendenhall River due to the high velocity and pressure from the flood flow. This caused water pressure to build up in the storm sewer system, leading to flooding in areas around the Mendenhall Valley Library and other nearby locations as water emerged from the manholes. This also occurred near the back of the Safeway by the Mendenhall River at Brotherhood Bridge. Last year, significant erosion occurred along the banks of the Mendenhall River. Residents, along with the city, implemented bank stabilization improvements, and by all accounts, most of the armoring held with minimal erosion, though some damage to the armoring will require repair.

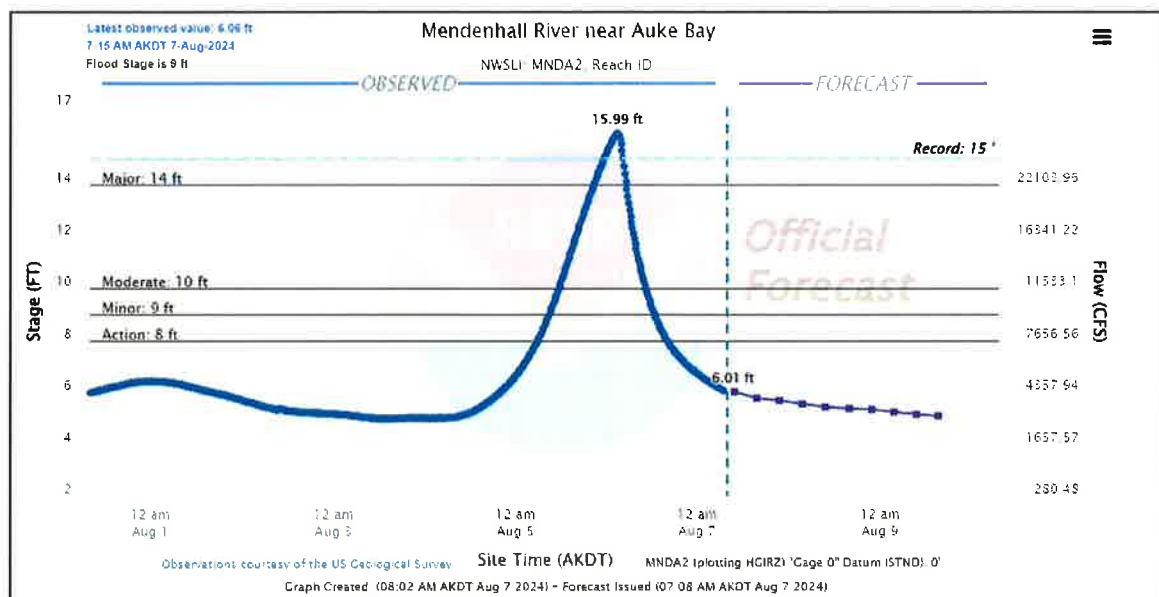


Figure #2: Hydrograph of the Mendenhall River showing NWS official forecast after crest

Timeline of Events

- **August 1st:** Suicide Basin reached a maximum pool elevation of approximately 1,381 FT (gauge datum). WFO Juneau issued a special weather statement.
- **August 4th:** The pool at Suicide Basin began to drop, and water levels at Mendenhall Lake began to rise, confirming that the basin was draining subglacially. The RFC issued a hydrograph forecasting a crest of 15.1 FT at 4:00 AM on August 6. WFO Juneau issued a Flood Warning at 10:48 AM.
- **August 5th, 6:00 AM:** Mendenhall Lake reached the action stage of 8 FT (gauge datum).
- **August 5th, 9:15 AM:** Mendenhall Lake reached minor flood stage of 9 FT (gauge datum).
- **August 5th, 12:00 PM:** Mendenhall Lake reached moderate flood stage of 10 FT (gauge datum).
- **August 5, 2:49 PM:** WFO Juneau updated the Flood Warning with a new crest forecast of 15.7 FT at 1:00 AM on August 6.
- **August 5, 9:15 PM:** Mendenhall Lake reached major flood stage of 14 FT (gauge datum); major impacts began with large areas starting to see water overflow the banks.
- **August 6, 1:00 AM:** Reports of significant major flooding along Riverside Drive, Killewich Drive, Meander Way, and all other roads west of Riverside. Flooded roads near Division and Julep Street, with water in the Safeway parking lot from manholes.
- **August 6, 3:15 AM:** Mendenhall Lake crested at a record stage of 15.99 FT (gauge datum).
- **August 6, 4:45 AM:** Mendenhall Lake dropped below major flood stage.
- **August 6, 10:45 AM:** Mendenhall Lake dropped below moderate flood stage.
- **August 6, 12:00 PM:** Mendenhall Lake dropped below minor flood stage.
- **August 6, 4:30 PM:** Mendenhall Lake dropped below action stage.

Storm Report Summary

See Appendix A.

Photos



Image #1: Multiple areas experienced major flooding with about 290 homes being impacted with some seeing 4 to 6 FT of water in them. (Photo Credit - Alaska Senator Lisa Murkowski, via [Facebook](#))



Image #2: Major Flooding of Killewich Drive, Melvin Park, Cemetery, Emily Way, Sharon Street, Riverside Drive



Image #3: Minor Erosion of bank along Rivercourt Drive from flood water draining back into the river



Image #4: Major flooding along Emily Way



Image #5: Flood damage from flowing water down Riverside Drive.



Image #6: Flood waters from backed up storm drains near the Valley Library



Image #7: Major Flooding along Riverside Drive.



Image #8: Major Flooding along Meander Way

Appendix A - Storm Reports

Time & Date	City Location	County Location	Source	Remarks
1:30 PM 08/06/2024	1 NNE Mendenhall Valley	Juneau, AK	NWS Storm Survey	NWS Storm Survey found that along Sharon Street to Riverside Drive there was 2 FT of water in multiple homes during the peak of the event.
1:30 PM 08/06/2024	2 N Mendenhall Valley	Juneau, AK	NWS Storm Survey	NWS Storm Survey found that along Marion Drive there was about 1 foot of water during the peak of the flooding.
1:30 PM 08/06/2024	1 N Mendenhall Valley	Juneau, AK	NWS Storm Survey	NWS Storm Survey found that along Killewich Drive there was 2-3 FT of water over the road during the peak of the event and up to 3 FT of water along one house.
1:30 PM 08/06/2024	1 NNE Mendenhall Valley	Juneau, AK	NWS Storm Survey	NWS Storm Survey found that along Emily Way there was 2-3 FT of water in multiple homes during the peak of the event.
4:30 AM 08/06/2024	1 NE Mendenhall Valley	Juneau, AK	Public	Public reported that the north, west, and south sides (yard) of house flooded. Water crested and receded before entering home.
4:16 AM 08/06/2024	Juneau	Juneau, AK	Public	Gee Street near the stop sign at Killewich - Water is up to the top of the bottom step for the front and back doors, and seeping into the garage. Power is out on Gee, but still on on Long Run.
3:15 AM 08/06/2024	4 N Mendenhall Valley	Juneau, AK	Other Federal	USGS station at Mendenhall Lake, MND A2, crested at a peak, new record level, of 15.99 FT at 3:15 AM Tuesday.
6:11 AM 08/06/2024	1 N Mendenhall Valley	Juneau, AK	Public	Emily Way still under 2-3 FT of water post glacial outburst flood.
2:21 AM 08/06/2024	Mendenhall Valley	Juneau, AK	NWS Employee	An NWS Employee reports flood water is moving up behind Safeway, and is rising through manhole covers.
2:10 AM 08/06/2024	2 N Mendenhall Valley	Juneau, AK	NWS Employee	Marion Dr closed and impassable due to water over roadway.
2:07 AM 08/06/2024	1 NNE Mendenhall Valley	Juneau, AK	Local Official	A local official reports flooding on Division Street and Taku Blvd.

12:48 AM 08/06/2024	1 N Mendenhall Valley	Juneau, AK	Local Official	Per a local official, flooding has begun to approach the Mendenhall Community School, and is around places like Killewich Drive, Stephen Richards Drive, and that flood water near Meander Way is now at or above the height of the fire hydrants.
12:36 AM 08/06/2024	1 NNE Mendenhall Valley	Juneau, AK	Dept of Highways	Water has begun to overtop Riverside Drive at Melvin Park, with a current water level of about 6 inches.
11:56 PM 08/05/2024	1 N Mendenhall Valley	Juneau, AK	NWS Employee	AN NWS Employee reports that flood water along Meander Way has reached 2 - 3 FT in depth, and that there is likely a foot of water in one house along the street, and that water is approaching the garage of another house.
11:34 PM 08/05/2024	1 N Mendenhall Valley	Juneau, AK	NWS Employee	An NWS Employee has reported that flooding is occurring along Meander Way.
10:02 PM 08/05/2024	2 N Mendenhall Valley	Juneau, AK	Public	Major flooding. There is water into homes. Road is impassable. Power has been cut to the area.
9:15 PM 08/05/2024	4 N Mendenhall Valley	Juneau, AK	Other Federal	USGS station MNDA2 Mendenhall Lake rose above Major Flood Stage 14 FT.
9:44 AM 08/05/2024	Mendenhall Valley	Juneau, AK	Public	Public reported the first big trees starting to float down the Mendenhall River.
12:00 PM 08/05/2024	3 NE Auke Bay	Juneau, AK	Park/Forest Srv	Skaters Cabin Road closed to traffic due to water over the road.
12:00 PM 08/05/2024	4 N Mendenhall Valley	Juneau, AK	Other Federal	USGS station MNDA2 Mendenhall Lake rose above the moderate flood stage of 10 FT.



Central Council of the Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska

907.586.1432 • 800.344.1432

PO Box 25500 • Juneau, Alaska 99802

TlingitandHaida.gov

September 18, 2024

**REQUEST FOR PRESIDENTIAL DISASTER DECLARATION
CENTRAL COUNCIL TLINGIT & HAIDA INDIAN TRIBES OF ALASKA
REQUEST COVER LETTER FOR MAJOR DISASTER DECLARATION**

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Through:
Mr. Willie G. Nunn
Regional Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency, Region X
130 228th Street SW
Bothell, WA 98021-9796

Dear President Biden,

Dear President Biden,

Pursuant to Section 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. § 5121–5207) and Title 44 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 206.36, the Central Council of Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (Tlingit & Haida), in collaboration with the State of Alaska, submits this request for a major disaster declaration as a subrecipient following the catastrophic Mendenhall Glacier Outburst Flood (GLOF) that occurred on August 5-6, 2024. The flood caused widespread destruction in Juneau, Alaska, the traditional lands of the Tlingit and Haida peoples, severely impacting both tribal and non-tribal citizens. As a sovereign tribal nation, Tlingit & Haida responded immediately to mitigate damage and provide relief, but the magnitude of this disaster requires federal assistance to support long-term recovery and future mitigation efforts.

Incident Overview and Tribal Response

The Mendenhall Glacier Outburst Flood (GLOF) released approximately 15 billion gallons of water on August 5-6, 2024, overwhelming the Mendenhall River, which crested at record levels, flooding homes, destroying critical infrastructure, and wiping out subsistence resources. The City and Borough of Juneau (CBJ) and surrounding areas were unprepared for the extent of the devastation, prompting the National Weather Service (NWS) to issue emergency flood warnings and evacuation orders.

Tlingit & Haida immediately activated its Tribal Emergency Operations Center (TEOC), working closely with the State of Alaska to coordinate shelter operations, emergency response efforts, and mobilization of resources. We utilized our Everbridge alert system to issue critical communications to our citizens, ensuring rapid emergency communications and coordination of relief efforts. Despite these swift actions, the scope of the flood caused extensive displacement and damage to our

community.

Previous Tribal Emergency Responses and COVID-19 Impact

Tlingit & Haida has a history of leading effective disaster response efforts across Southeast Alaska, regularly assisting neighboring communities and demonstrating strong regional leadership during emergencies. However, the cumulative toll of these disasters, combined with the ongoing recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, has strained our resources and infrastructure.

1. COVID-19 Pandemic Response:

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Tlingit & Haida played a pivotal role in protecting tribal and non-tribal citizens. We quickly established a comprehensive response plan that included distributing personal protective equipment (PPE), deploying COVID-19 testing and vaccination sites, and supporting access to critical healthcare in remote areas. The pandemic has had long-lasting effects on our community, with economic losses, increased unemployment, and elevated public health concerns that continue to impact our ability to respond to new disasters.

2. Wrangell Landslide (2023) – Technical Assistance:

In November 2023, when a landslide struck Wrangell, claiming lives and destroying homes, Tlingit & Haida provided technical assistance to the Wrangell Cooperative Association. Our team facilitated emergency communication, supported displaced residents, and assisted in coordinating recovery efforts, demonstrating our capacity for disaster response across the region.

3. Haines Landslide (2020) – Dewatering, Heavy Equipment, and Sheltering:

Following the devastating 2020 landslide in Haines, Tlingit & Haida responded by deploying dewatering equipment to restore the Haines Airport, providing heavy machinery for debris removal, and contributing sheltering resources to displaced residents. This collaborative effort helped restore critical infrastructure and ensured the safety of the community.

4. Water System Failures – Water and Purification Assistance:

During water system failures caused by frozen pump houses in Angoon and Hydaburg, Tlingit & Haida provided water supplies and water purification units to ensure access to clean drinking water. Our proactive response to these infrastructure emergencies reflects our commitment to safeguarding not only our tribal citizens but also the broader community.

These past responses demonstrate Tlingit & Haida's ongoing leadership in addressing regional crises. However, the cumulative toll of these disasters, compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic, has left our community vulnerable and in urgent need of federal assistance to fully recover from the Mendenhall GLOF.

The Inevitable Nature of Future Glacial Outburst Floods

The Mendenhall Glacier Outburst Flood (GLOF) is not an isolated event. In fact, it is the second year in a row that such a flood has devastated the Juneau area. In 2023, the Mendenhall River crested at 14.97 feet—at that time a record-breaking event. This year, the river crested at 15.99 feet, exceeding last year's flood by more than a foot, causing even more widespread damage to homes, infrastructure, and subsistence resources.

The Suicide Basin, where these GLOFs originate, continues to grow as the glacier recedes due to

climate change. Scientists have warned that GLOFs from Suicide Basin are likely to recur annually or even more frequently as warming trends accelerate glacial melting. Each successive flood risks becoming more destructive as more water is released from the basin. This creates a heightened, ongoing threat to the Tlingit & Haida citizens living in the Mendenhall Valley and the broader Juneau area.

The inevitability of these floods demands urgent investment in long-term mitigation measures and improved early warning systems. Without immediate federal assistance, the tribe and the surrounding communities will continue to face repeated destruction, displacement, and loss of subsistence resources.

Impact on Tribal Citizens and Cultural Resources

The August 2024 flood has left many Tlingit & Haida citizens without homes, and the loss of subsistence resources—such as salmon, deer, seaweed, and berries—has critically impacted their way of life. These resources are not only essential for food security but are also integral to our cultural identity and traditional practices.

The destruction of homes, many of which are multi-generational, has displaced dozens of tribal families. The psychological toll on our citizens, already compounded by last year's GLOF, is immense, with many experiencing ongoing trauma, anxiety, and uncertainty about the future. This disaster has devastated our community's resilience, and the long-term emotional impact, especially on elders and children, is severe.

Specific Requests for Federal Assistance

I. Individual Assistance (IA) for Housing and Tribal Citizens' Recovery

Immediate assistance is needed to address housing displacement and long-term recovery for our tribal citizens.

1. Temporary Housing Assistance:

Many displaced families remain in temporary housing arrangements, with the onset of winter compounding the urgency for stable accommodations. We request 18 months of Temporary Housing Assistance, based on HUD Fair Market Value, to provide shelter until permanent repairs can be completed.

2. Repairs and Reconstruction Grants:

Homes that suffered flood damage require extensive repairs or total reconstruction. Federal grants are essential for home repairs, particularly for low-income households that cannot cover the out-of-pocket costs of rebuilding. Winter months are quickly approaching and if repairs are not made in a timely manner the community will continue to suffer.

3. Other Needs Assistance (ONA):

The flood destroyed household items, tools, vehicles, and subsistence equipment critical to our citizens' livelihoods. We request ONA funding to replace essential items, including tools for subsistence gathering and crafts.

II. Cultural and Subsistence Resource Restoration

The loss of subsistence resources due to the flood is a profound cultural and economic blow to our community. Many families rely on subsistence foods, such as salmon, deer, berries, and seaweed, which were lost or contaminated by floodwaters. The flood also destroyed tools essential for harvesting, processing, and storing these traditional foods, compounding the devastation. To address

these losses, we request:

1. Subsistence Resource Recovery Program:

Federal assistance is urgently needed to help replace both the lost subsistence foods and the tools required for harvesting and processing. Many households had stored large quantities of subsistence food in freezers located in garages and other areas that were inundated by hazardous, contaminated floodwaters, rendering the food unsafe. We request funding to:

- Replace freezers and food storage systems damaged by the flood.
- Provide financial support to replace contaminated subsistence foods, including salmon, wild game, berries, and seaweed, which are vital to our food security and cultural practices.
- Restore access to traditional harvesting areas, including salmon runs, hunting grounds, and gathering sites, that were damaged by the flood.
- Replace harvesting tools and equipment, such as fishing gear, hunting equipment, and traditional processing tools (e.g., dehydrators, smokehouses), which are essential for gathering and preparing subsistence resources.

2. Cultural Preservation Grants:

The flood also destroyed many ceremonial and traditional tools used in cultural practices, deeply affecting the identity of our people. These items, passed down through generations, hold immense spiritual significance and are central to our way of life. We request Cultural Preservation Grants to:

- Restore or replace ceremonial and cultural items damaged in the flood.
- Support the continuation of traditional practices by providing funds for the repair of cultural tools used in ceremonies and community gatherings.
- Preserve cultural heritage sites and protect them from future flood risks.

III. Crisis Counseling and Mental Health Services

The recurring nature of GLOFs has caused long-term psychological stress on our community. We request:

1. Crisis Counseling Services:

Federal funding is needed for short-term and long-term crisis counseling tailored to the unique needs of our tribal citizens. The trauma from successive floods requires specialized mental health services to help our people cope with this ongoing threat.

2. Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA):

Many tribal citizens have lost work due to the flood, particularly those engaged in subsistence and seasonal employment. We request DUA to provide financial support for those who have lost income due to the disaster.

IV. Public Assistance (PA) for Tribal Emergency Response Costs

Tlingit & Haida took a leading role in responding to the GLOF, but federal assistance is needed to continue these efforts:

1. Debris Removal and Emergency Protective Measures (Categories A & B):

The flood deposited large amounts of debris on tribal lands, homes, and public spaces. Federal assistance is requested for debris removal and the continuation of emergency protective measures to ensure the health and safety of our community.

V. Hazard Mitigation and Future Flood Prevention

To safeguard against future GLOFs, we support the State of Alaska's request for flood mitigation efforts and request additional measures focused on tribal lands:

1. Flood Mitigation Projects:

We request federal funding for levee reinforcement, drainage improvements, and riverbank stabilization to protect tribal lands and homes from future GLOFs.

2. Early Warning Systems:

The recurrence of GLOFs requires enhanced real-time monitoring of Suicide Basin and improvements to the early warning systems to give citizens adequate time to evacuate and prepare for future flood events.

Conclusion

Tlingit & Haida has consistently demonstrated our capacity for leadership in disaster response, both for our tribal citizens and the broader Southeast Alaska region. However, the scale of the Mendenhall GLOF, combined with the inevitability of future floods, requires immediate federal assistance. We request your action in declaring a major disaster and providing the necessary federal aid programs to ensure the recovery and protection of our community.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter.

Gunalchéesh / Háw'aa / Thank You,



Richard J. Peterson
President