



For Immediate Release

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Press Release:

Joint State/FEMA Preliminary Damage Assessment in Field to Document 2011 West Coast Storm Damages

ANCHORAGE, Alaska – The State and FEMA are deploying joint Preliminary Damage Assessment (PDA) teams this week to communities in coastal Alaska to gather information in support of State and Federal disaster declaration decisions.

“The communities did a great job preparing for this storm. They used their Emergency Operations Plans, established shelters, and took steps to protect their utilities,” said Bryan Fisher, Incident Commander for the 2011 West Coast Storm. “Communities hit by the storm did not require emergency assistance from the State Emergency Operations Center which is evidence of their level of preparedness. The damage from this storm could have been much more severe.”

The State Emergency Operation Center (SEOC) has received reports of residential, infrastructure, and road damage in communities along the western coast of the State. Communities along the coast continue to survey for damage, currently the only Local Disaster Declaration the State has received is from the Kivalina City Council.

Three PDA teams are establishing bases of operations in Nome, Bethel and Kotzebue. From those hub communities the PDA teams will travel to communities and conduct damage assessments.

“Alaskan communities, especially remote rural communities, take emergency preparedness very seriously. Their careful planning and actions during the storm has allowed the state to quickly deploy these PDA teams and start the recovery process,” said Fisher.

The SEOC continues to be staffed with extended hours to support the PDA team deployments and to receive any requests for assistance or local emergency/disaster declarations.

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