



Office of the Borough Mayor

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Charlie Pierce
Borough Mayor

DISASTER EMERGENCY DECLARATION FOR THE KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH

October 2, 2020

WHEREAS, on September 28, 2020 the National Weather Service forecasted several storms that are expected to affect the Seward and Bear Creek vicinity by bringing significant rains to the area; and

WHEREAS, the National Weather Service has also forecasted this rainfall totals may mimic the rainfall experienced in the 2012 and 2018 declared flood events in that area; and

WHEREAS, the Seward Bear Creek Flood Service Area has placed equipment in the streams and channels to attempt to mitigate the effect of the impending storm; and

WHEREAS, as of this date there have been high water issues in the following locations: Kwechak Creek, Lost Creek, Salmon Creek, Sawmill Creek, and Clear Creek; and

WHEREAS, the water has threatened some borough-maintained roads and bridges, specifically including Dieckgraeff Road, a gravel road located in the City of Seward providing the only access to the borough-owned and operated solid waste transfer facility in the Seward-Bear Creek area; and

WHEREAS, the National Weather Service is forecasting continuing rainfall which is expected to require immediate response to protect against this imminent threat of widespread and severe damage; and

WHEREAS, the Kenai Peninsula Borough expects to expend significant resources to temporarily repair Dieckgraeff Road, the Box Canyon and Kwechak Creek water diversion structures, and Lost Creek Bridge to limit damages to roads and bridges, ensure access to critical infrastructure, and protect the public safety; and

WHEREAS, both public and private property is expected to suffer damage due to this event; and

WHEREAS, as a second class borough the Kenai Peninsula Borough does not have the authority to provide financial support to the cities in the borough to repair or replace their damaged facilities; and

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WHEREAS, the Kenai Peninsula Borough expects to provide incident management and basic resources to monitor conditions, to coordinate emergency actions and repairs as needed, but does not have sufficient funds or resources to repair the damages expected to be caused by this storm in the borough outside of the City of Seward or to assist the City of Seward and other agencies and residents expected to be affected by this disaster; and

NOW THEREFORE, I declare a Disaster Emergency per AS 26.23.140 to exist in the Seward-Bear Creek area in the Kenai Peninsula Borough outside the City of Seward that are determined to have been damaged by the high water due to heavy rainstorms that began September 30, 2020, continued through this date, and, according to the National Weather Service, are forecast to continue for at least another four days, and as such I have activated the emergency response plan of the Kenai Peninsula Borough in order to address the speedy recovery from the substantial damages which are expected to exceed the resources and capacity of the Kenai Peninsula Borough to recover.

FURTHERMORE, the Kenai Peninsula Borough requests that the Governor of the State of Alaska declare a disaster emergency to exist as described in AS 26.23 and provide disaster assistance to the Kenai Peninsula Borough and the City of Seward in the response and recovery expected from this event, to provide individual assistance for affected property owners including homeowners and business owners with property damage that may result from this storm, and to provide immediate damage assessment assistance, technical expertise, guidance, and resources to expedite recovery and mitigation.

FURTHERMORE, the Kenai Peninsula Borough requests that the Governor of the State of Alaska direct State agencies with direct ownership or responsibility in the mapping, debris location, debris removal, permitting, reconstruction and other processes, to assist and expedite assistance that would result in a plan to address debris locations, all necessary permitting, waiving state and University of Alaska fees for gravel removed as part of the response to this disaster, and other processes and to coordinate local assistance regarding infrastructure protection and repair, permitting, in-water mitigation, debris removal, and mapping with the Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Coast Guard, and other agencies at all levels of government.

Dated this 2nd day of October, 2020.

James Baisden, Chief of Staff

Charlie Pierce
Kenai Peninsula Borough Mayor

ATTEST:

Johni Blankenship

Johni Blankenship
Borough Clerk

