



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

Department of Military and
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Division of Homeland Security
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November 14, 2022

Anne Bink, Associate Administrator
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Headquarters, Federal Emergency Management Agency
500 C Street, South West
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Through: Mr. Willie G. Nunn, Regional Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency Region X
130 228th Street SW
Bothell, WA 98021-9796

Ms. Bink:

Under the provisions of 44 C.F.R. 206.40(c), I hereby request that the Pribolof Islands Regional Education Attendance Area (REAA) be added as a declared area to FEMA disaster DR 4672-AK, declared by President Biden on September 23, 2022. Specifically, I am asking you to authorize the Public Assistance (PA) program, Categories A-G, for the Pribolof Island REAA. Pursuant to 44 C.F.R. 206.40(d), I am submitting this written request within the extended deadline of November 19, 2022, as approved by you in your November 7, 2022 letter.

Beginning September 15, 2022, a powerful 937-millibar low pressure system, comprised of the remnants of Typhoon Merbok, moved across the Aleutian Islands, Bering Sea (including the Pribolof Islands), and along the West Coast of Alaska. This system produced hurricane-force winds, higher than normal tidal ranges, and storm surges of up to 10 feet above mean sea level. The event caused wind damage, and riverine and coastal flooding, to approximately 40 cities and villages along an approximately 1,300-mile-long section of the Western and Northwestern Alaska coastline. As a result of the widespread nature of this event, Governor Dunleavy declared a state disaster (AK 22-290) for the 2022 September West Coast Storm on September 17, 2022. The majority of the storm's impacts continued through September 20, 2022; thus, the incident period for this storm is September 15 – 20, 2022.

Governor Dunleavy further requested federal disaster assistance for four REAAs in Alaska: Bering Strait REAA, Lower Yukon REAA, Lower Kuskokwim REAA, and Kashunamiut REAA. These areas were included in the DR 4672-AK federal disaster declaration and authorized for individual and public assistance (CAT B only), and statewide hazard mitigation.

Local officials, supported by National Weather Service observations, report the storm impacted the Pribolof Islands with strong hurricane-force winds, 50-foot-high sea waves, and wind-driven storm surge resulting in widespread storm damage to private homes, public facilities, and harbor infrastructure. As a result, Governor Dunleavy amended the September 17, 2022 state declaration to include the Pribolof Islands REAA as an impacted area.

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The Pribolof Islands REAA, comprised of the twin islands of Saint Paul and Saint George, was included in the joint Preliminary Damage Assessment (PDA) conducted virtually (i.e., no site visit) by local, State, and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) staff from October 17 – November 1, 2022. The PDA focused on PA only. A virtual PDA operation was chosen as the best method to ensure evaluator and public safety due to limited daylight (less than eight hours per day), and poor winter weather conditions in late October 2022.

The PDA team validated \$ 14,768,595 in Category D public assistance costs for the Pribolof Islands REAA, above the FEMA countywide Public Assistance per capita impact indicator under Title 44 of the CFR Sections §§206.48(a)(1). The countywide per capita impact indicator of \$ 2,591.20 for the Pribolof Islands REAA was calculated by multiplying 632 REAA residents (2020 Census) by the Federal FY 2022 per capita countywide indicator of \$4.10. FEMA also calculated the financial impact of the disaster per capita at \$23,368.03 or 9X the countywide indicator for the Pribolof Islands REAA.

It should be noted that the PDA validated total storm-related PA damages for the Bering Strait REAA, Lower Yukon REAA, Lower Kuskokwim REAA, Kashunamiut REAA, and Pribolof Islands REAA at \$28.05 million, of which 52.7% were solely within the Pribolof Islands REAA. The total damages from the West Coast Storm justify the President's swift declaration of disaster emergency as DR 4672-AK for the State of Alaska last September. The total PA damages for the disaster, validated at over \$28 million, is 23 times the minimum statewide per capita threshold required by the Stafford Act of \$1,195,427 calculated by multiplying 733,391 Alaska residents (2020 Census) by the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 per capita indicator of \$1.63.

Therefore, I feel it is reasonable and appropriate for the Pribolof Islands REAA be included in the DR 4672-AK federal declaration for public assistance and hazard mitigation.

Sincerely,



Bryan J. Fisher
Governor's Authorized Representative

cc: Al Cavallo, State Coordinating Officer, Department of Military and Veterans Affairs,
Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management