



CHAPTER FIVE: DCRA: AN EFFECTIVE COOPERATING TECHNICAL PARTNER

Alaska's constitution calls for an executive branch agency to advise and assist local governments (Article X, Section 14). The duty to serve as the constitutional local government agency is delegated to Commerce pursuant to AS 44.33.020(a)(4).6. Within Commerce, DCRA performs the local government agency's functions.

Consistent with its mission, DCRA has been the designated State Coordinating Agency for the NFIP for more than 30 years. DCRA was directed to serve in this capacity by Alaska Administrative Order No. 46, which took effect on January 24, 1978. Currently, Alaska Administrative Order No. 175 appoints DCRA as the Governor's Designated State Coordinating Agency for the NFIP. Administrative Order No. 175 directs DCRA to assist state agencies in complying with this order through the following land use measures:

- Protecting the state's capital investments by ensuring future state-owned and state-financed construction projects are sited and constructed in a manner that reduces the potential for flood and erosion damage;
- Sighting and constructing state-owned and state-financed projects using FEMA regulations pertaining to construction standards as a guide for flood-prone, mudflow-prone, and flood-related erosion-prone areas;
- Using pertinent portions of the FEMA NFIP regulations, 44 CFR Part 60, as a guide for such construction activities, encouraging a broad and united effort to lessen the risk of flood and erosion losses in connection with state lands and installation and state-financed or supported improvements. Specifically, state agencies directly responsible for building structure construction, and other development including grading, paving, and excavation, shall to the maximum extent possible, preclude the uneconomic, hazardous, or unnecessary use of documented flood plains and erosion areas in connection with such development;
- Considering the potential of flood and erosion hazards. Consideration shall be given to setbacks, flood proofing, building elevation, and erosion control measures in flood and erosion-prone areas;
- Evaluating flood and erosion hazards in connection with lands or properties proposed for disposal and, in order to minimize future state expenditures for protection and disaster relief, shall consider including within all new subdivision proposals and other proposed developments greater than 50 lots or 5 acres, whichever is the lesser, base (100) year flood elevation data, or information on approximate flood risks; and

Taking flood and erosion hazards into account when evaluating plans and permits and encouraging land use approximate to the degree of hazard involved. As the designated State Coordinating Agency for the NFIP, DCRA was also responsible for the implementation of Alaska's Map Mod program. DCRA additionally fulfills Commerce's charge through two State Administrative Orders (231 and 239) "to act as the state coordinating agency to coordinate with the other state and federal agencies to propose long-term



solutions to the ongoing erosion issues in... affected coastal communities..."

DCRA's mission to advise and assist Alaska's local governments, the Division's directive to coordinate with other state and federal entities on behalf of Alaska's local governments regarding erosion hazards, and the Division's historical role in coordinating the NFIP and flood mapping in Alaska make it an effective and appropriate agency to serve as the State Cooperating Technical Partner with FEMA and to coordinate Alaska's Risk MAP Program.

Figure 35: Ice Jam Flooding in Galena, Spring 2013



Photo: Ed Plumb, National Weather Service