

Kenai Peninsula Borough Resilience Workshops

City of Seward, August 22nd, 2017

Community Needs and Priorities

Gravel/Sediment and Flooding

- Several million cubic yards of silt comes from glacial melting each year, resulting in increased flooding in multiple areas. This issue will only get worse as more silt builds up.
 - Removing in-stream bed-loads is expensive and obtaining funding from State and Federal partners has proven extremely difficult (as the work is generally identified as “maintenance” work).
 - State tax/fees are associated with removal of gravel from streams.
- Identified floodplains are based on historic flood levels and may not adequately account for changes associated with rising stream floors.
- There is limited developable land in Seward and much of what appears to be appropriate for development is at risk to flooding due to sediment issues and related channel migration.
- Lowell Creek Diversion Tunnel has been identified as “conditionally unsafe” by the USACE in part due to regular sediment-clogging issues.
- Relatedly, the road going out to Lowell Point is impacted by avalanche and snow. Road totally blocked off from landslides in past, limited to water taxi access.

Levees

- Numerous levees (many of which are essentially just gravel banks), constructed at different times in and around the City to protect different areas, are well-beyond their original intended useful life and could be at risk to breaching.
- Multiple levees have eroded during flood events in recent years. Some have been restored, but future breaches of these levees could lead to major damage to schools, residences, and businesses.

Priority Actions Identified During Panel Discussion

1. **Internal Capacity Building - in terms of community connectivity and ability to address needs of vulnerable populations.**

Existing Resources: CERC community engagement resources; staged emergency evacuation event

Specific Ask: Community Engagement Plan for CRS

Contact(s): Jimmy Smith (State NFIP Coordinator, AK DCRA), Cynthia McCoy (Risk Analyst, FEMA Region 10), Karen Wood-McGuinness (Floodplain Management Specialist, FEMA Region 10)

2. **Collect, organize, and make data available (including multi-hazards maps and BFE+ Depth Grids)**

Existing Resources: Region X FEMA data sets; the State Parks parcel viewer (which could also potentially host this data)

Specific Ask: Coordinate with Chris Clough to post the risk database within the parcel viewer

Contact(s): Marshall Rivers (FEMA Regional Service Center), Sally Cox (State Risk MAP Coordinator, DCCED), Chris Clough (GIS Manager, KPB Office of emergency Management), Tyra Edwards (State Parks viewer)

3. **Develop a Sediment Management Plan**

Existing Resources: Sawmilk Creek could serve as a template for the Sediment Management Plan. It is being referred to as a site-specific hazard mitigation plan. Requires approval from DNR

Specific Ask: Help identify sources of funding for change detection maps, sediment detection, identification of locations where sediment can be deposited

Contact(s): Brent Nichols (State Hazard Mitigation Officer, AK DHS&EM) for Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grant Program; Cynthia McCoy (Risk Analyst, FEMA Region 10) & Sally Cox (State Risk MAP Coordinator, DCCED) for CTP funding

4. Reframe sediment removal as more than a maintenance issue; Action is necessary because the build-up of sediment exacerbates the intensity of flood events

Specific Ask: DHS&EM to provide language that would help frame sediment removal as a flood mitigation issue

Contact(s): Brent Nichols (State Hazard Mitigation Officer, AK DHS&EM), Alex Fonteyn (Resilience Specialist, AK DHS&EM)

5. Beach Nourishment using removed gravel could provide a win-win solution

Specific Ask: DHS&EM to provide language that would help frame sediment removal as a flood mitigation issue, as opposed to a maintenance issue

Contact(s): Michael Levkowitz (Project Coordinator, FEMA Community Outreach Team), Cynthia McCoy (Risk Analyst, FEMA Region 10), Sally Cox (State Risk MAP Coordinator, DCCED)

6. Grant funding for implementation of actions

Existing Resources: PDM Funds allocated by FEMA to State of Alaska on annual basis. HMGP funds made available following declared disaster event (75% federal and 25% match). USACE might also be able to assist. Grant funding is also provided by other state and federal agencies (grant was previously awarded to City of Seward for EWP through NRCS for powerline protection)

Specific Ask: When pursuing FEMA funding, support in developing successful applications that are competitive with a focus on the Benefit-Cost Analysis (BCA). Challenge meeting BCA threshold because the property protection numbers are low in relation to the cost of investment. Support in rethinking funding opportunities by relating needs to economic development or environmental protection, as opposed to flood mitigation

Contact(s): Brent Nichols (State Hazard Mitigation Officer, AK DHS&EM) and Alex Fonteyn (Resilience Specialist, AK DHS&EM) for FEMA Grants; John Foutz with City of Seward Electric Department for NRCS background; Sally Cox (State Risk MAP Coordinator, DCCED) for diverse funding sources.

7. Floodplain Management and Training for Locals

EXISTING RESOURCES: CFM Exam Prep Course

Specific Ask: Host a CFM Exam Prep Course

CONTACT: Sally Cox (State Risk MAP Coordinator, DCCED), DHS, EM

8. Community Rating System outreach and engagement

Existing Resources: FEMA Region X contacts and resources

Specific Ask: Provide materials and support to help raise awareness about the value of participating in the Community Rating System in terms of saving money and reducing flood risk.

Contact(s): Cynthia McCoy (Risk Analyst, FEMA Region 10)