



Press Release

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For Immediate Release

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River Breakup Monitored By SEOC and River Watch Team

CAMP DENALI, Alaska - The State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) activated today to monitor potential flooding during this spring river break-up season. The SEOC preparedness level is currently at level 2, this indicates a heightened sense of awareness. The SEOC activates each spring to monitor river break-up. This year's spring flood potential forecast is available through the Alaska Pacific River Forecast Center's web site at <http://aprfc.arh.noaa.gov>.

Each spring the River Watch program, a partnership between Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHS&EM) and the National Weather Service Alaska-Pacific River Forecast Center (APRFC), conducts aerial observations of ice jam prone rivers, provides flood warnings and alerts, and assists communities with emergency management and/or evacuations. River Watch Teams employ one APRFC Hydrologist, one DHS&EM Emergency Manager, and one local pilot. Today, a River Watch team is traveling to Eagle where they will begin monitoring ice conditions on the Upper Yukon.

"Spring has come late to Alaska this year, low temperatures and late snow has delayed break-up. If we see a swing from below normal temperatures to high temperatures severe flooding is a possibility," said Bryan Fisher, Incident Commander. "With the River Watch teams in place and the SEOC activated we can quickly make assessments, determine the threat, and set in motion the necessary emergency response assets."

To help communities prepare for spring break-up DHS&EM published and distributed the Alaska [Small Community Emergency Response Guide](#) to riverine communities throughout Alaska. The Small Community Emergency Response Guide contains detailed emergency preparedness information for community leaders, utility managers, schools, and residents.

"In 2009, a rapid warming brought severe flooding along the Yukon and Kuskokwim rivers," said Fisher. "Time will tell whether we have nuisance flooding or another severe year. If it is the latter we are ready to move."

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