

Association of Village Council Presidents Press Release

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For Immediate Release

Kuskokwim Communities on High Alert for Potential Breakup Flooding

Bethel, Alaska - Regional Resources Coordination Committee (RRCC) Chair is Alvin Jimmie Sr., AVCP VPSO Coordinator, lead a teleconference with the following communities: Akiak, Kalskag, Tuluksak, and Bethel.

The RCC is made up of representatives from the following regional organizations: AVCP, the Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation (YKHC), City of Bethel, the Lower Kuskokwim, the Alaska National Guard, and Orutsararmiut Native Council. The RCC monitors and prepares for possible flooding conditions every spring as the river ice melts and begins flowing down the river.

The Native villages of Upper Kalskag, Lower Kalskag, Akiachak, Tuluksak, and Kwethluk, are on high alert for potential flooding. All participants noted unseasonably high water.

“Below Akiak and between Tuluksak there is a jam. It’s unknown where the ice will go on the Akiachak side or the Kwethluk side because it’s holding there. And water is still coming down from Aniak. Activity can happen. Water level will most likely increase. From our teleconference yesterday it will be kind of like what they described. It will be kind of like a wave coming down. That wave hasn’t hit yet, but he wants you to be prepared and cautious.” Says Alvin Jimmie, Sr.

“If you feel that the community is unsafe –the entire community is unsafe – then that’s when we would be... a call to do some movement of people for an evacuation. But there will be some intermediate steps there before that happens.” says a representative from the State of Alaska Emergency Response Center. “We’ll be monitoring this as well to see how the situation is developing.” He noted that if people have to move, “the place to move people would be to Bethel.”

Alaska National Guard helicopters are standing by, but all evacuations must be originated through the Alaska State Troopers.

Alvin Jimmie, Sr., encourages participants to call 1-800-478-9112 in the case of an emergency.

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For additional information, please contact AVCP Director of Communications, Azara Mohammadi, at 907-544-7317 or email at azaram@avcp.org.

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AVCP is a regional nonprofit tribal consortium comprised of the 56 federally recognized tribes of the YK Delta. The geographic boundaries of AVCP extend from the Yukon River Village of Russian Mission downstream to the Bering Sea coast, north up through Kotlik and south along the coastline to Platinum and then extending up the Kuskokwim River to Stony River, including Lime Village on the Stony River tributary. The area encompasses approximately 6.5 million acres, or 55,000 square miles, in Western Alaska.