

Media Advisory – 1 p.m., Nov. 12, 2008

Contact: Christopher Schwarzen

EOC phone: 425-388-5060

Office: 425-388-3883

Email: Christopher.Schwarzen@snoco.org

Executive Reardon issues emergency declaration

Snohomish County Executive Aaron Reardon has issued an emergency declaration to respond to flooding throughout the area.

The emergency declaration frees up county resources for quicker response to flooding impacts and helps the county document damages for federal reporting.

Reardon said increasing concerns on the Skykomish, Snohomish and Stillaguamish rivers led to the signing.

“Our primary goal is public safety during these floods, and this emergency declaration will enhance the efforts we already are making,” Reardon said.

The Snohomish County Department of Emergency Management (DEM) earlier urged residents along Tualco Loop Road, Tester Road and 164th/Ben Howard Road to prepare for evacuation due to rising flood waters on the Skykomish and Snoqualmie rivers. Waters in that area were expected to rise above flood stage and begin covering roadways near noon.

Voluntary evacuations also were occurring in Index, Sultan and Gold Bar as waters from the Skykomish and Wallace rivers began to overflow.

Law enforcement and fire crews in Gold Bar helped a family of four escape from rising waters surrounding their home, while fire crews near Startup assisted a family living near the Skykomish River evade flood waters.

Rescue crews assisted a car stuck in flood waters off Ben Howard Road safely escape to higher ground. No injuries were reported.

To accommodate displaced families, the American Red Cross has opened a shelter at the VOA Sky Valley Camp, 701 First St., Sultan, and will be opening another shelter at the Rock Church, 16891 146th St. SE, Monroe, near 1:30 p.m.

DEM continues to coordinate resources to protect public safety and property from flood damage. Residents in low-lying and flood prone areas are being urged to monitor river levels closely.

The Skykomish River at Gold Bar was at 18.57 feet at 12:30 p.m., nearly 4 feet above flood stage. It is projected to crest at nearly 23 feet near 4 p.m. today, only 1 foot below levels set in 2006.

The Snohomish River at Monroe was measuring at 13.94 feet near at 12:15 p.m. and expected to crest at nearly 22 feet at 10 a.m. Thursday. Flood stage is 15 feet.

The South Fork of the Stillaguamish River at Granite Falls was at 13.07 feet near noon and expected to crest at 14.11 feet at 4 p.m. today. Flood stage is 14 feet.

About 130 animals had arrived at the Evergreen State Fairgrounds, including 10 cows, four zebras and more than 100 horses. The Fairgrounds has opened its barns. Residents are able to take livestock and large animals needing shelter to the horse barns.

Snohomish County Public Works crews continue to deliver sand and bags to various locations along the Skykomish, Snohomish and Stillaguamish rivers. Sultan residents, including school children released early, were bagging sand for use along Main Street, which sustained heavy damage during the 2006 flood.

Gold Bar received about 1,000 bags for sand this morning and requested another 400 bags this afternoon.

Sand and bags are available for individual citizens' use. Residents should visit the drop-off sites to collect sand and bags. Sand and bags were delivered to Fire Station 54, Gold Bar; Fire District 5, Sultan; Fire District 26, Index; Ferguson Park, Snohomish; Fire District 19, Station 94, Stanwood; and the Oso Fire Station, Oso.

Snohomish County Public Works has closed several roads throughout the county, including 399th Avenue Southeast near Gold Bar and Mann Road at Sultan due to flooding. Highway 2 is not closed.

Residents are urged to stay away from rising waters and not to drive through areas of flowing or standing water or around road closure barriers.

Road flooding should be reported to the municipality where it occurs. Flooding on county roads can be reported to the Public Works Department at 425-388-7500 or contact.pwr@snoco.org.

Road closure lists and flood updates can be found at www.snoco.org. Additional flooding issues can be reported to Emergency Management at 425-388-5060.

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SNOHOMISH COUNTY EMERGENCY DECLARATION

FLOOD EMERGENCY

WHEREAS, Snohomish County has been subjected to climatic conditions favorable to flooding; and

WHEREAS, the Skykomish River at Gold Bar gauge is currently at 18.5 feet and is predicted to rise to 21.7 feet by 4:00 p.m. which is 5.7 feet over flood stage; and

WHEREAS, the Snoqualmie River at Carnation is currently at 51.5 feet and is predicted to rise to 60.2 feet by 10:00 a.m. Thursday, Nov. 13th, which is 6.2 feet over flood stage; and

WHEREAS, the Snohomish River is currently projected to crest at 19.4 feet at and is predicted to rise to 32.4 feet at approximately 10:00 a.m. Thursday, Nov. 13th; and

WHEREAS, damages have occurred to Snohomish County roads and bridges, utilities, private roads, homes, businesses, and farmland due to rising river levels; and

WHEREAS, there is an emergency present which necessitates activation of the Snohomish County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan and utilization of emergency powers granted pursuant to RCW 38.52;

NOW THEREFORE, I, Aaron G. Reardon, County Executive of Snohomish County, as a result of the aforementioned situation and under RCW 38.52.020 (1)(b) and RCW 36.40.180 do hereby proclaim that a State of Emergency exists in Snohomish County and direct the supporting plans and procedures to the Snohomish County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan to be implemented. Designated departments are authorized under RCW 38.52.070 (2) and SCC 3.04.200 to enter into contracts and incur obligations necessary to combat such an emergency and to protect the health and safety of persons and property, and provide emergency assistance to the victims of such disaster. Each designated department is authorized to exercise the powers vested in this resolution in light of the demands of an extreme emergency situation without regard to time consuming procedures and formalities prescribed by law (excepting mandatory constitutional requirements).

DATED this 12th day of November 2008.

**COUNTY EXECUTIVE OF
SNOHOMISH COUNTY, WASHINGTON**



Aaron G. Reardon