



# Floodplain Newsletter

PHOTO: KCHU Tower threatened by Valdez Glacier Stream

2016 Edition

September 19, 2016

## FEMA Funds Levee Analysis for Alpine Woods Area

On March 1st, 2016 City Council authorized FEMA to map the parcels adjacent to the Alpine Woods and Nordic Subdivision utilizing the procedures in the Levee Analysis and Mapping Approach (LAMP).

Properties adjacent to the levee system will be secluded from the upcoming FEMA FIRM Map updates. FEMA will be using the new procedures to determine associated flood risk to adjacent parcels with a more detailed analysis.

FEMA has allocated funding for the project for the fiscal year 2017.

The study, to be contracted October 1st, will include a 2D analysis to determine water flow between the levee segments.

This analysis will help homeowners determine the associated flood risks of living next to a levee system. It will also help policy makers develop a long-term flood resiliency plan.

-AnnMarie Lain CFM



### FIRE VS FLOOD

If you live in a floodplain, the risk of damage to your home from flooding is **five times greater** than from fire.

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## What You Can Do in Advance!

If you live in a flood-prone area or behind a levee, don't delay!

### PREPARE FOR A FLOOD

- ☐ Purchase flood insurance.
- ☐ Prepare an emergency kit that includes at least one large flashlight, a battery powered radio, spare batteries, candles, waterproof matches, and other items you would likely need in the event of a power outage.
- ☐ Store insurance papers, deeds, and other important records in a safe-deposit box or other secure location.

***Flood-proof and protect your utilities. Retrofitting & protecting your home can help in time of flooding.***

### PREPARE YOUR HOME

- ☐ Elevate your furnace, water heater, and electric panel if they are susceptible to flooding.
- ☐ Install "check valves" in sewer traps to prevent floodwater from backing up into drains.
- ☐ Seal basement walls and storage crawl spaces with waterproofing compounds to avoid seepage.
- ☐ Keep heirlooms and other priceless possessions on an upper level, if possible, or in locations within your home that are least likely to flood.

### PREPARE FOR AN EVACUATION

- ☐ Make a list of items to take with you in case of an evacuation (for example: clothing, cash and credit cards, prescription medications, eye glasses, mobile phones, etc.). Keep this list in a handy location.
- ☐ Determine an evacuation route you should take in the event of an emergency.
- ☐ Learn where official shelters are located and plan your route to the nearest shelter or other safe area. Consider whether any location along your planned route might flood.



**“Remember  
T.A.D.D—Turn  
Around Don’t  
Drown. Currents  
can be deceptive.”**

## Rivers are Not the Only Flooding Culprits.

### USGS to install stream-gauge on Valdez Glacier Stream

The City of Valdez will enter a Joint Funding Agreement with the United States Geological Survey (USGS) to continue to operate a stream-gauging station on the Lowe River and to install and operate a stream-gauging station on the Valdez Glacier Stream.

Stream-flow information is provided for a wide variety of uses including: flood prediction, water management and allocation, engineering design, research, and recreational safety and enjoyment. Data is displayed in real-time on the web (<http://waterdata.usgs.gov/nwis>).

There are three ways to access streamgauge data from the Lowe River.

- 1) Search for USGS Gauge #15226620 at <http://waterdata.usgs.gov/nwis>
- 2) Visit COV Floodplain Management homepage at <http://www.ci.valdez.ak.us/index.aspx?nid=411> and click on the quicklink to the right.
- 3) Get FREE stream-flow alerts via text message or email at <http://water.usgs.gov/wateralert/nwis>

Select Site Location by entering site number #15226620

Click on the map pin-point to Subscribe to Water Alert

Complete Subscription form, and enter a threshold condition.

REPLY to the one-time confirmation email for either alerts and you will receive notifications based on the threshold condition you selected!

### Questions to ask yourself before developing:

Am I in the Special Flood Hazard Area?

Am I building, mining, dredging, filling, grading, paving, or excavating?

Am I storing equipment or large materials that could become dangerous or contribute to flooding issues in a flooding event?

**Don't Know?  
Contact  
Community  
Development at  
834-3450**

## FLOODPLAIN DEVELOPMENT PERMITS ARE REQUIRED!



#### Flooding will happen.

All rivers, streams, and lakes will flood eventually. This means that all levees will combat floodwaters at some point. Floods can happen to *anyone*.



#### Risks associated with flooding vary.

You are responsible for knowing the threat you face from flooding. Don't assume that someone else is watching out for you. Take responsibility.

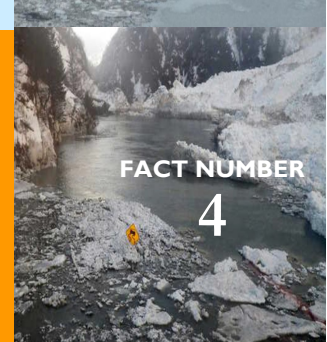
#### No levee is flood-proof.

Levees *reduce* the risk of flooding. But no levee system can *eliminate* all flood risk. A levee is designed to control a certain amount of floodwater. If a larger flood occurs, floodwaters can flow over the levee.

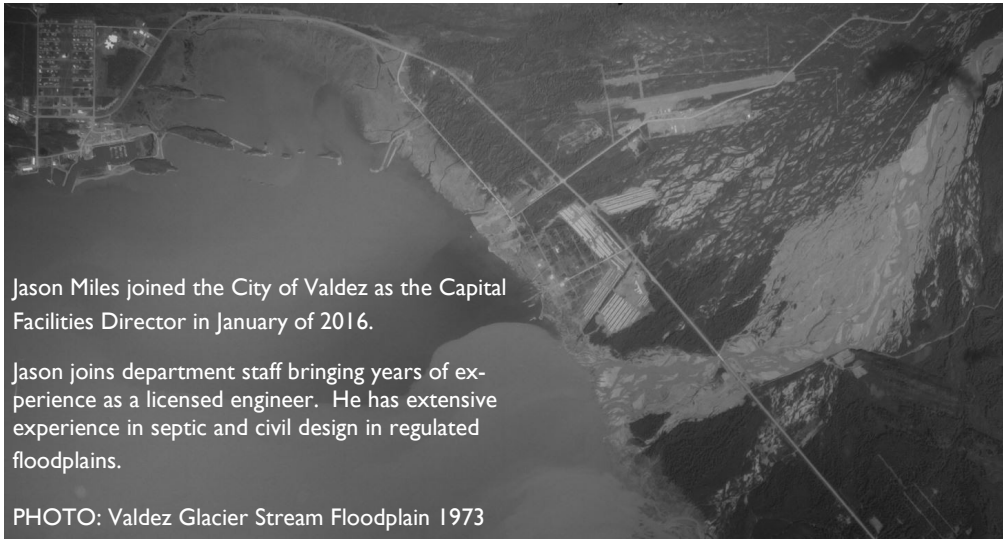


#### Actions taken now can save lives and property.

There are many steps you can take, from purchasing flood insurance to developing an evacuation plan. The sooner you act, the better off you will be when the next flood occurs.



## Valdez welcomes Jason Miles as new Certified Floodplain Manager



Jason Miles joined the City of Valdez as the Capital Facilities Director in January of 2016.

Jason joins department staff bringing years of experience as a licensed engineer. He has extensive experience in septic and civil design in regulated floodplains.

PHOTO: Valdez Glacier Stream Floodplain 1973

## FEMA in the process of updating FIRM Flood Maps for Valdez

Over the last several years, FEMA has been working with the City to gather data on floodplains in an extensive effort to update the FEMA-issued Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM). The regulatory FIRM identifies the Community's flood zones, base flood elevations, and floodplain boundaries.

This map is used to determine where the purchase of flood insurance is required for properties with federally-backed mortgages and is used by Staff to determine areas of development requiring floodplain development permits.

The regulatory maps that the City uses to determine Special Flood Hazard Areas were done in 1983 with limited quality data. In 2014 the City entered a Valdez Study Partnership

Agreement with FEMA by Council approval.

As encouraged by this agreement, Staff has been sharing study concerns with project staff and providing any information that would affect the modeling of the 1% annual chance event.

The preliminary map products will be delivered to the Mayor and the City by the end of September. FEMA will be scheduling a public meeting in the upcoming months to go over the preliminary products.

- 1) Review the proposed maps at: <https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/dcra/PlanningLandManagement/RiskMAP/CityofValdezRisk-MAPStudy.aspx>

- 2) Watch for a letter in the coming months about the public meeting.
- 3) Contact the City's certified floodplain manager with any questions.

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Community & Economic  
Development  
City of Valdez

**DID YOU KNOW?**

## FLOOD INSURANCE

The NFIP imposes a **30-day waiting period** following the purchase of flood insurance. This ensures that a policy is purchased and maintained throughout the year. Residents cannot purchase it in the wake of an impending flood or because they have heard very heavy rains are on their way. It has to be in place 30 days *before* a flooding event begins.

**Know where to go! City of Valdez evacuation centers are as follows:**

- **Downtown Valdez and surrounding areas – High School & Civic Center**
- **Airport Area – Airport Terminal & National Guard Armory**
- **Robe River Subdivision Area – Fire Station #3**
- **Alpine Woods Area – Fire Station #4**



## CITY OF VALDEZ

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- **Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)**  
[www.fema.gov/](http://www.fema.gov/)
- **Flood Insurance**  
[www.fema.gov/nfip/](http://www.fema.gov/nfip/)
- **Map Service Center**  
[www.msc.fema.gov/](http://www.msc.fema.gov/)
- **National Flood Insurance Program—Flood SMART**  
[www.floodsmart.gov/floodsmart/](http://www.floodsmart.gov/floodsmart/)
- **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers**  
[www.nwp.usace.army.mil/](http://www.nwp.usace.army.mil/)
- **State of AK, Floodplain Management**  
[www.flood.alaska.gov](http://www.flood.alaska.gov)

# Websites

## City of Valdez 2016 Floodplain Newsletter

### MAIL TO:

US POSTAGE  
PAID  
VALDEZ, AK  
PERMIT NO. 11  
VALDEZ, AK 99686

## Let Us Help YOU!

**City of Valdez**  
[www.ci.valdez.ak.us](http://www.ci.valdez.ak.us)

- Internet Floodplain Information:  
<http://www.ci.valdez.ak.us/index.aspx?nid=411>

**Valdez Consortium Library**  
(Houses floodplain publications and info)  
Phone: (907) 835-4632  
Web: [www.ci.valdez.ak.us/lib/](http://www.ci.valdez.ak.us/lib/)

## The City of Valdez provides FREE

- ☐ Technical Advice for reducing the flood hazard to personal or commercial property
- ☐ Development reviews for activities in the floodplain
- ☐ Information on how to retrofit drainage and other residential issues
- ☐ FIRM maps and floodplain determinations
- ☐ Handouts and brochures on disaster preparedness, flood-proofing, retrofitting, and much more!

City personnel have been trained by **FEMA** on flood-proofing techniques and are available to provide site-specific data concerning floor elevations and historical flood levels.

For these and more services, please contact the City's Community & Economic Development Department (834-3401) and ask for the following personnel:

Rusty Hansen,  
Building Inspector,  
[rhansen@ci.valdez.ak.us](mailto:rhansen@ci.valdez.ak.us),

and

AnnMarie Lain,  
Certified Floodplain Manager,  
[alain@ci.valdez.ak.us](mailto:alain@ci.valdez.ak.us).