



**Alaska Winter Storm
FEMA Region X
November 8-11, 2011
ESF 11 After Action Report (AAR)**



Incident Summary

ESF-11 was activated by FEMA Region X on November 8, 2011. ESF-11 Coordinator reported to the FEMA Regional Response Coordination Center (RRCC) in Bothell, Washington on November 9, 2011 to support FEMA and the State of Alaska, due to an incoming severe winter wind storm and blizzard predicted to affect the entire western Alaska Coastal region. The storm moved north-northwest on November 9-10 and resulted in coastal flooding and erosion, power and telephone outages, and structural wind damage in 37 coastal communities. The State of Alaska reported a few community shelters in operation, including one with 400 occupants. Conference calls were conducted twice a day with the Alaskan State Emergency Coordination Center (SECC). ESF-11 reached out to the USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) Western Region Field Operations Office, APHIS programs (specifically Animal Care), other ESF-11 partner agencies such as Food Safety Inspection Service and the Department of the Interior, USDA State Emergency Board agencies, and the State Veterinarian in Alaska to notify them of the ESF-11 activation and to establish information sharing. An ESF 11-Desk Officer assistant was deployed to the RRCC on November 9, 2011. ESF-11's role was keeping FEMA informed of the USDA efforts to assess feeding needs in affected Alaska communities and USDA preparations for household pet/service animal/working dog issues. ESF-11 was demobilized on November 11, 2011.

Lessons Learned

What Went Well

- 1) ESF-11 Coordinator received Activation Mission Assignment before deploying to the RRCC
- 2) USDA program coordination: FNS provided timely information to address FEMA questions about USDA Commodities in schools, potential Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program waivers, and State feeding assistance needs. Farm Service Agency and Rural Development Directors shared information in preparation for possible recovery role.
- 3) APHIS Western Region support was excellent, especially the sled dog information from Animal Care and the resource request assistance from Plant, Protection and Quarantine and Dispatch.

Challenges/Areas for Improvement

- 1) Not having internet connectivity (Sprint air card) at the RRCC was a big concern. (Note local IT support provided alternate air card which was invaluable). Sprint service isn't available in Bothell, Washington.
- 2) Deployment of FEMA ESF 6/Individual Assistance staff to Alaska the first day of the storm created potential duplication of situational awareness data between FEMA and Alaska. We recommend relying on Alaska SECC reporting for situational awareness regarding community assistance needs.
- 3) Questionable requests of ESF-11 by FEMA included an inquiry regarding need for feeding assistance in Alaska, feeding protocol for shelter with 400 occupants and a request to assist in the creation of a generic Shelter Resource Plan for future use. We recommend focusing on the incident, during response rather than developing planning documents.