

State of Alaska Department of Natural Resources



Public Information Center
550 W. 7th Ave., Ste 1260
Anchorage, AK 99501

Phone: 907.269.8400
Fax: 907.269.8901
TTY: 907.269.8411

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New maps describe tsunami hazards for Juneau and Kodiak

(Fairbanks, AK) – Juneau and Kodiak have new maps to help prepare for tsunamis in the event of a large earthquake or underwater landslide.

In collaboration with University of Alaska Fairbanks geoscientists, the Division of Geological & Geophysical Surveys has published new reports that describe potential inundation from tsunami waves for Juneau and Kodiak. The report authors combined historical observations and computer simulations to model potential earthquakes and the resulting tsunamis, and used the results to map the extent and depth of potential tsunami floodwaters on land. The maps can be used by community planners, emergency managers and residents to develop action plans for when a tsunami threatens.

The Juneau study is the first of its kind for the capital city and shows that an underwater landslide in Fritz Cove may present a potential tsunami hazard for Juneau that is greater than what is predicted for an earthquake-generated tsunami. Previous tsunami hazard maps for Kodiak, published in 2002, were used extensively by the U.S. Coast Guard and City of Kodiak to improve tsunami readiness. New bathymetric and topographic data for the Kodiak area, and a better understanding of potential earthquake sources, have allowed researchers to significantly improve the analysis of potential tsunami scenarios.

Tsunamis are a real danger for many coastal communities in Alaska and depending on the location of an earthquake, a tsunami can reach a community within minutes. Estimating the flooding that may result from a tsunami is an essential component in community planning to reduce the risk of property damage and loss of life.

Reports are available on the DGGGS website:

Juneau – <http://doi.org/10.14509/29741>

Kodiak – <http://doi.org/10.14509/29740>

For more information about DGGGS, visit <http://dgggs.alaska.gov> to sign up for RSS feed or email notification, or follow DGGGS on Twitter or Facebook. For more information about tsunami inundation mapping, visit the interactive application at <http://maps.dgggs.alaska.gov/tsunami/>.

CONTACT:

Barrett Salisbury (DGGGS), 907-451-5974, barrett.salisbury@alaska.gov

Elena Suleimani (Alaska Earthquake Center), 907-474-7997, ensuleimani@alaska.edu

Dmitry Nicolsky (Alaska Earthquake Center), 907-474-7397, djnicolsky@alaska.edu

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