



WESTERN
REGION
UNIVERSITIES
CONSORTIUM

SUPPORTING TRIBAL DISASTER RESPONSE IN THE WESTERN U.S.

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UCLA Labor Occupational Safety & Health (LOSH) Program

Western Region Universities Consortium (WRUC)

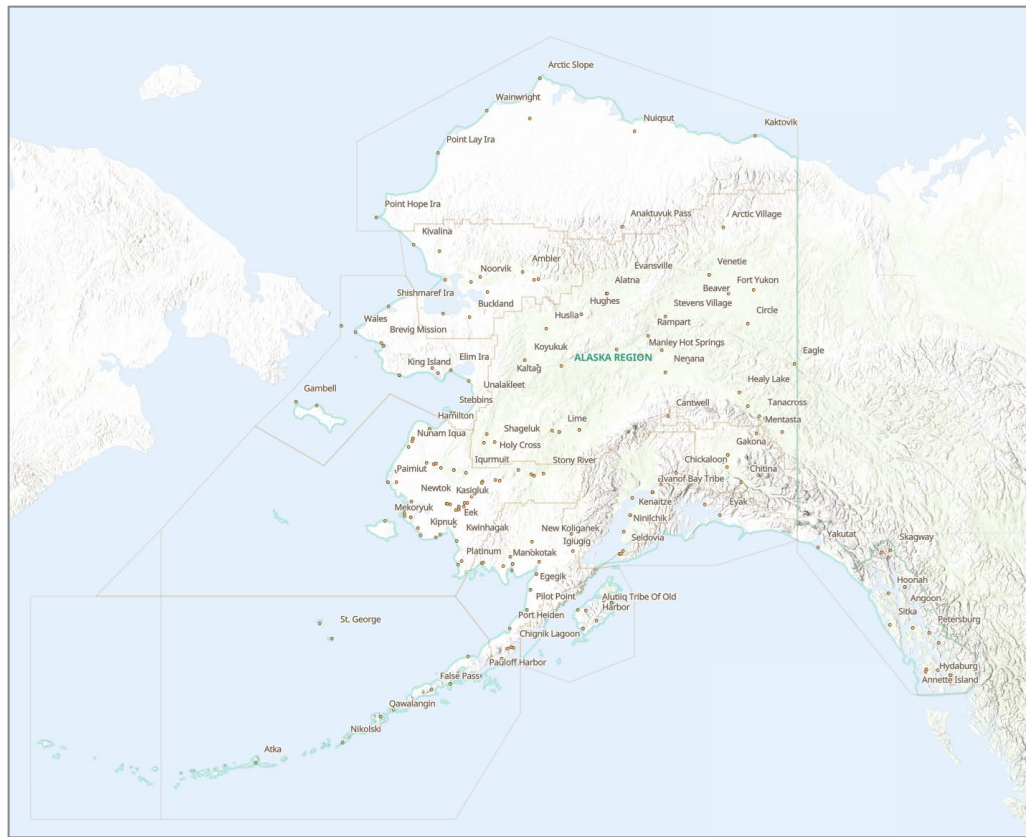
September 3, 2024





EPA Region 10 (Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, Washington):
271 federally recognized tribes

EPA Region 9 (Arizona, California, Nevada):
148 federally recognized tribes



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Disaster issues for tribal communities

- ❖ Rural or geographically remote locations
- ❖ Operate own jurisdictions independent of state and federal emergency management oversight
- ❖ Limited connections to formal state or federal emergency response resources
- ❖ Limited access to training and other resources
- ❖ High rates of poverty and unemployment

Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation's Division of Spill Prevention and Response:

“Because of the state’s vast size and remoteness, local residents are frequently the first line of defense in responding to oil or hazardous substance releases since outside responders cannot typically arrive in time to deal with immediate impacts.”



Flooding is seen in Golovin, Alaska, on Saturday, Sept. 17, 2022.



Flooding in Newtok on Saturday, Sept. 17, 2022. (Lucinta Ivon)

WRUC tribal partners

Alaska Forum on the Environment

Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium

Intertribal Council of Arizona

National Tribal Emergency Management
Council

Tribal Solid Waste Advisory Network

U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs

Zender Environmental

Local tribal communities in Southwest,
Pacific Northwest and Alaska



National Tribal Emergency Mgmt Council

Consortium of tribal entities that work together to share resources, knowledge, planning resources, and mutual aid

Focus on all-hazard approaches to emergency management and homeland security

Emphasis on inter- and intra-jurisdictional cooperation to maximize resources



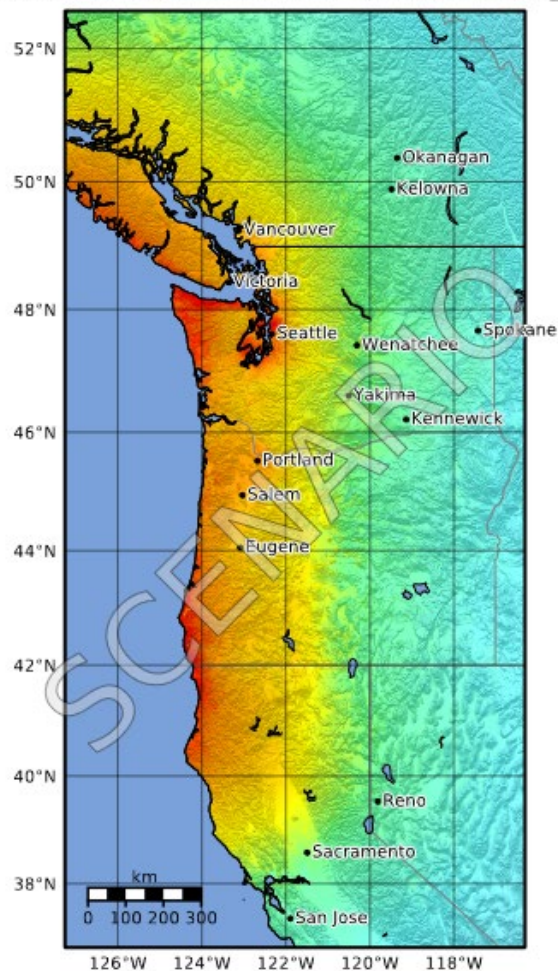


Magnitude 9.0 earthquake along the Cascadia Subduction Zone

Up to 6 minutes of severe shaking along coastal areas of Washington, Oregon, Northern California and Vancouver Island

Aftershocks of magnitude 7.0 continue for several weeks

Tsunamis, liquefaction, landslides, hazmat contamination, fires and toxic emissions



SHAKING	Not felt	Weak	Light	Moderate	Strong	Very strong	Severe	Violent	Extreme
DAMAGE	None	None	None	Very light	Light	Moderate	Moderate/heavy	Heavy	Very heavy
PGA(%g)	<0.0066	0.0795	0.954	4.99	8.76	15.4	27	47.4	>83.2
PGV(cm/s)	<0.0028	0.0383	0.524	3.03	6.48	13.9	29.6	63.4	>136
INTENSITY	I	II-III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X+

Scale based on Atkinson and Kaka (2007)

△ Seismic Instrument ○ Reported Intensity

★ Epicenter

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Thunderbird & Whale Exercises

- ❖ Planning and Logistics
- ❖ Transportation
- ❖ Communications
- ❖ Mass Care, Temporary Housing, and Emergency Assistance
- ❖ Public Health and Medical Services
- ❖ Search and Rescue
- ❖ Public Safety and Security
- ❖ Oil and Hazardous Materials Response
- ❖ Agriculture and Natural Resources
- ❖ Energy
- ❖ External Affairs





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Key partners

- ❖ FEMA Regions 8 and 9
- ❖ U.S. Coast Guard
- ❖ U.S. Dept of Transportation (hazardous materials, pipelines)
- ❖ U.S. Volunteers -- Joint Services Command
- ❖ Bureau of Indian Affairs
- ❖ CA Tribal Emergency Response & Relief Agency
- ❖ Emergency Volunteer Air Corp
- ❖ WA and OR Disaster Airlift Response Teams
- ❖ Amateur radio groups
- ❖ Feeding America
- ❖ County food banks
- ❖ Farmer Frog
- ❖ State and county health departments

ESF #8: Public Health and Medical Services

ESF Exercise Partners:

- Green Cross Academy of Traumatology (GCAT)
- Oregon Health Authority
- Snohomish County Public Health Department
- Washington State Department of Health

NTEMC Community Lifeline Objectives

1. Activate regional health and medical resources as necessary.
2. Facilitate the procurement of medical personnel and supplies for the tribal nations.
3. Support regional tribal critical response efforts by delivering emergency medical and health relief support supplies via general aviation to tribal areas.

Pre-Exercise Activities

What activities helped to prepare for the exercise?

- The Washington State DOH team met to discuss the exercise
- ESF-8 partners observed the planning calls
- One participant started looking into getting a ham radio license

During Exercise Activities

What activities were done during the exercise?

- Washington State DOH COVID-19 liaison officer attended the exercise as the ESF-8 lead
- DOH typically handles document and PPE requests (e.g., 300,000 masks were received at the EOC during the exercise)
- DOH liaison helped answer questions about Medical Reserve Corps and public health information
- DOH liaison informed participants about key contacts within DOH
- Listened and learned from other partners to help determine needs requests and help make those requests
- Talked about communications and how to communicate through ham operators
- Monitored the hospital capacity and determined the need for mass care and evacuation centers, assumption in the exercise was that masks would be needed to prevent another outbreak of COVID case when evacuations are needed
- Members of the GCAT conducted a tabletop exercise on June 9 to help support the National Tribal Emergency Management Council "Thunderbird and Whale" drill. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z6nSahhE2sQ>
- Dr. Mary Schoenfeldt of GCAT provided Just-in-Time Training: Disaster Stress Management in person at the EOC, which was broadcast via Zoom on June 14

- Leila Ladnier, nurse, United Healthcare in Alabama, logged into the livestream at the command center and contacted some participants via email to discuss resource suggestions

Post-Exercise Activities

What activities were done after the exercise concluded?

- Provided feedback and debriefed the DOH team
- Followed up with Lynda Zambrano and the exercise team to have collaboration meetings

Resources

What resources did this ESF use during the exercise?

- Phone
- Email for communication to DOH team
- Internet

What resources were lacking but would be recommended for a real event?

- Additional communication would be needed for boots on the ground
- Additional transportation and medical supplies, especially in rural areas

Lessons Learned

What worked well during the exercise?

- The last few hours listening to the stories of other exercise partners was moving
- Communications
- The participants knowing their resources
- Collaboration between exercise partners
- Being all together in an EOC facilitated operations

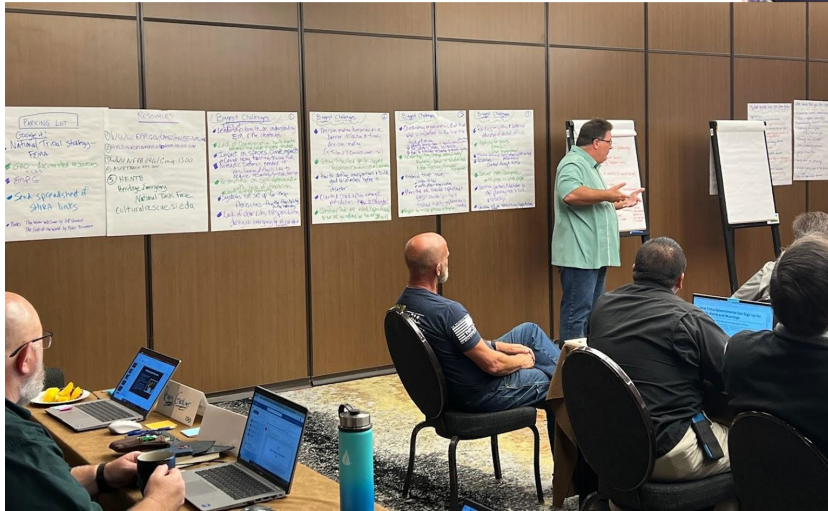
What did not work well during the exercise?

- Engaging in the exercise later in the planning process, there was not as much clarity about this specific role and what the needs would be for this role.

Recommendations for future exercises and/or for a real event:

- Engage DOH earlier in the planning process to have more time to prepare.
- With so many things in a disaster that cannot be anticipated, involve more perspectives and more resources to address whatever may be needed.
- There is always more to learn and more to do to help. Expand the number of participants to add more perspectives to the exercise.
- Make the exercise more problematic to inject more discussion and critical thinking.

Key Takeaways



“The exercise was enormous. It was outstanding what was done with the Native Americans and their needs.”

“We don’t need to do a plan every minute, but we have to have a good plan.”

“Everyone is a volunteer. There’s a honeymoon that keeps the volunteers engaged. So, we need to act fast on that energy to move forward.”

“Since the tribes will be greatly affected, there is no better driver to be in the driver seat than the tribes themselves.”

THANK YOU

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UCLA

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