



Alaska Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development
Division of Community and Regional Affairs

Action Plan 2025

Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR)

2022 Typhoon Merbok

FEMA Disaster No. 4672

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Record of Amendments

The following table summarizes amendments to the CDBG-DR Public Action Plan for 2022 Typhoon Merbok, FEMA Disaster No. 4672.

Date Action Plan was initially approved by HUD:
December 16, 2026

Date Amendment Approved by HUD	Amendment Number	Description of Amendment
	1	The State of Alaska is amending the Planning and Coordination Program to clarify and expand the range of eligible entities that may receive planning assistance. The original Action Plan focused primarily on Tribal organizations and regional planning partners. This amendment expands eligibility to include federally recognized Tribes, Tribal organizations, regional nonprofit organizations, regional housing authorities, Alaska Native organizations, councils of governments, boroughs, cities, and other local municipal governments located within HUD-Identified and State-Identified Most Impacted and Distressed (MID) areas.

Substantial Amendment Process

Substantial amendments to the Action Plan will require public notice and 30 days of public comment. The public notice will be posted to the CDGB-DR website and follow procedures detailed in the Citizen Participation Plan. An amendment shall be considered substantial (requiring public notification and comment period) if the following events occur:

1. A change in program benefit or eligibility criteria,
2. Addition or deletion of an activity,
3. A proposed reduction in the overall benefit requirement, or
4. Allocation or reallocation of funds that will constitute a change of 15% or greater of a program budget.
5. An update to the submitted initial Action Plan if the original submission was incomplete.

Substantial Amendment #1

Criteria 1 – Description of Content Added, Deleted, or Changed

The State of Alaska is amending this action plan to clarify and expand the range of eligible entities that may receive planning assistance. The original Action Plan focused primarily on Tribal organizations and regional planning partners. This amendment expands eligibility to include federally recognized Tribes, Tribal organizations, regional nonprofit organizations, regional housing authorities, Alaska Native organizations, councils of governments, boroughs, cities, and other local municipal governments located within HUD-Identified and State-Identified Most Impacted and Distressed (MID) areas.

These revisions increase flexibility by allowing eligible local governments and regional partners to address community-specific recovery and resilience needs while remaining consistent with the objectives of the Planning and Coordination Program.

Criteria 2 – Source and Use of Funds

No additional CDBG-DR funds are being requested through this amendment. Funding will continue to come from the existing Planning allocation established in the approved Action Plan. Funds will be used to support eligible planning activities that strengthen long-term disaster recovery, mitigation, resilience, and project readiness within HUD-Identified and State-Identified MID areas. The amendment expands the types of eligible applicants but does not create a new program or funding source.

Criteria 3 – Revised Budget Allocation

No change to the overall program allocation is proposed. The Planning budget will remain \$5,773,950. This amendment modifies program eligibility and allowable planning activities only. Individual awards will be made from the existing Planning allocation in accordance with program requirements.

Criteria 4 – Consistency with Recovery and Mitigation Needs

This amendment is consistent with the unmet recovery and mitigation needs identified throughout the Action Plan. Communities affected by Typhoon Merbok continue to require planning, engineering, environmental review, project development, and resilience planning to advance recovery projects and prepare for future hazards. Expanding eligible applicants to include local municipal governments, in addition to Tribal and regional partners, increases local capacity to develop implementation-ready projects that address documented disaster impacts and long-term resilience needs. The amendment does not alter the overall recovery strategy or program objectives but improves the State's ability to address identified unmet needs across both HUD-Identified and State-Identified MID areas.

1. Executive Summary

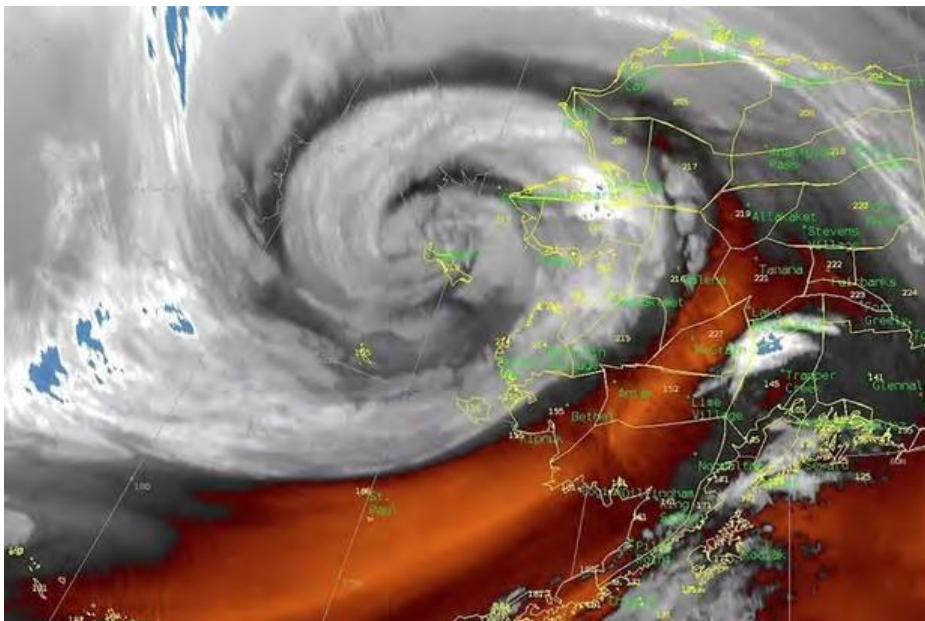
1.1. Overview

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced that the State of Alaska will receive \$38,493,000 in funding to support long-term recovery efforts following FEMA DR-AK-4672 Typhoon Merbok in 2022, through the State of Alaska Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development (DCCED), Division of Community and Regional Affairs. HUD allocated \$38,493,000 in CDBG-DR funds to the State of Alaska in response to FEMA DR-AK-4672 through the publication of 88 FR 32046 (FR-6393-N-01, Typhoon Merbok), published on May 18, 2023 (). This allocation was made available through Public Laws 117-180 and 117-328. Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funding is designed to address needs that remain after all other assistance has been exhausted. This plan details how funds will be allocated to address the remaining unmet need in over 50 communities in Western Alaska.

1.2. Disaster Specific Overview

From September 15 – 20, 2022, Typhoon Merbok impacted approximately 1,300 miles of the Western and Northwestern Alaska coastline, affecting over 50 communities in the Bering Strait, Lower Yukon, Lower Kuskokwim, Kashunamiut, Yupiit, and Pribilof Islands Regional Education Attendance Areas (REAs). The storm began as a typhoon in the north-central Pacific Ocean, in atypically warm waters, and arrived in Alaska early in the autumn storm season when there was no sea ice to protect coastal communities.

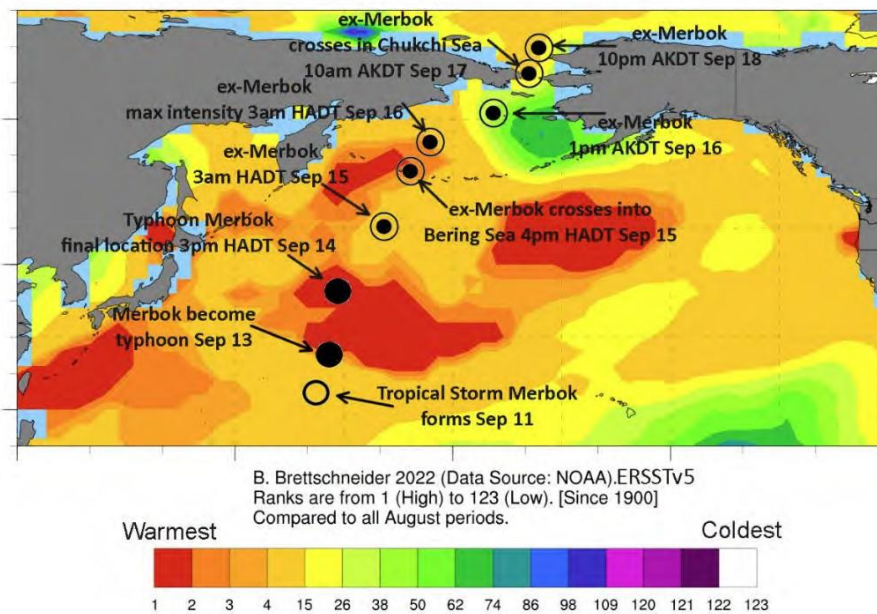
Figure 1. Typhoon Merbok Spins off the Coast of Western Alaska



Source: National Weather Service

The storm produced hurricane-force winds, higher-than-normal tidal ranges, and storm surges of up to 10 feet above mean sea level. Coastal and riverine flooding, wind damage, and severe erosion were reported throughout the region. Buoy station 46035, located 310 nautical miles north of Adak, recorded wind gusts of 76 miles per hour (mph) and seas of 52 feet. The storm’s minimum central pressure was recorded at 937 millibars (mb) – the lowest pressure recorded in the Bering Sea in September since 1950. While storms are not unusual in the Bering Sea, Typhoon Merbok was unusual due to its formation early in the season and far east of Japan, where sea surface temperatures are historically too cold for tropical cyclone formation. In 2022, the area saw the highest recorded temperatures since 1900.

Figure 2. Track of Merbok, September 11-18, 2022 – August 2022 Sea Surface Temperature Ranks Relative to 1900-2021



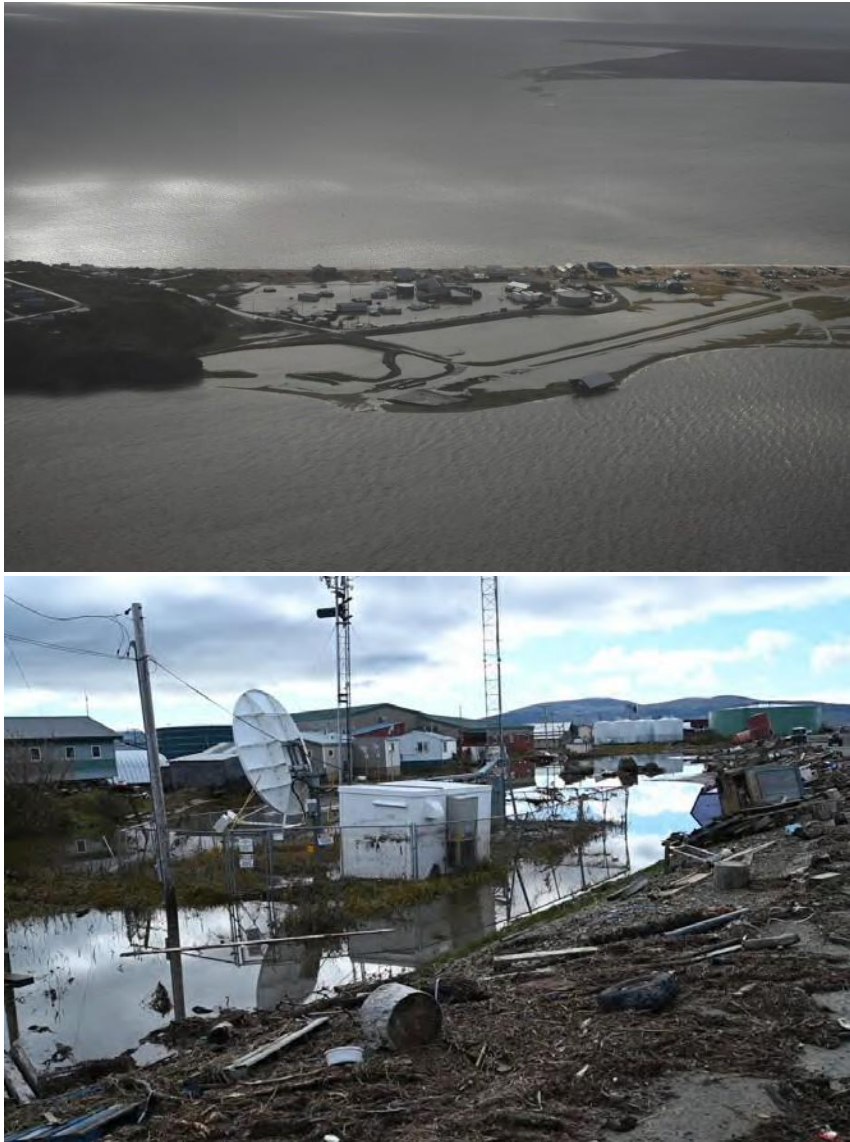
Source: Brettschneider, B. with data from NOAA

Initial impacts were reported in the Western and Central Aleutians and the Pribilof Islands, with damaging winds over 70 mph in some communities. The storm then moved into the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta, where winds gusted over 60 mph and storm surges caused significant coastal flooding. Inland areas along the Yukon River also experienced flooding. As the storm reached Norton Sound and the southern Seward Peninsula, it caused the worst flooding in nearly 50 years. Water levels rose 8 to 13 feet above the normal high tide line, with the highest flood depths reported in Golovin at over 17 feet. Impacts continued as the weakening system moved into the Chukchi Sea, where additional flooding and erosion occurred.

Communities across the Bering Strait, Lower Yukon, Lower Kuskokwim, Kashunamit, Yupiit, and Pribilof Islands REAAs experiences damage to homes, critical infrastructure, and culturally significant sites. Coastal and riverine flooding damaged roads, airstrips, power systems, barge landings, and water and wastewater facilities. Many communities lost essential public services and floodwater protection infrastructure such as berms and seawalls. Debris were scattered across the coastline. Personal property

and subsistence resources – boats, drying racks, fish camps, and traditional hunting and gathering areas – were impacted in the middle of the fall subsistence season.

Figure 3. Flooding and Debris in Golovin due to Typhoon Merbok



Source: 1) U.S. Coast Guard; 2) Jeremy Edwards, FEMA

The State of Alaska activated its Emergency Operations Center on September 14, and the Governor declared a state disaster on September 17. The Governor formally requested a federal major disaster declaration on September 20, citing severe threats to life and property. President Biden approved the declaration on September 23, authorizing Individual Assistance, Public Assistance (Categories A-G), and the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program under FEMA Disaster #4672. Further amendments expanded assistance to include debris removal and permanent work in additional REAAs.

Using FEMA and other federal data collected after the storm, HUD determined that Bering Strait REAA, Kashunamiut REAA, and Lower Yukon REAA had the highest need for recovery funding. These areas

were designated as “HUD-Identified MID” areas and are eligible for at least 80% of the non-mitigation allocated funding. The State, as the HUD grantee, is permitted to add areas adversely impacted by the storm using local data and information; these are designated as “State-Identified MIDs” and are eligible for up to 20% of the non-mitigation allocated funding.

Typhoon Merbok underscored the increasing frequency and severity of coastal hazards in Alaska and the urgent need for long-term recovery solutions, as described in *The Unmet Needs of Environmentally Threatened Alaska Native Villages* (ANTHC 2024). The communities impacted are predominantly Alaska Native, remote, and environmentally threatened. Many residents live at or below the federal poverty line, and private property insurance is often unavailable or cost prohibitive. Recovery efforts have been compounded by the high cost of construction, supply chain limitations, and logistical challenges unique to rural Alaska.

Figure 4. Typhoon Merbok Timeline of Events (2022)

Timeline of events	Response
September 2022	
September 13 The National Weather Service issues the first high wind and coastal flood.	September 17 → Governor Dunleavy declares a state disaster and notified the legislature of response costs up to \$10,000,000 from the State Disaster Relief Fund.
September 15 Buoy station 46035 records Typhoon Merbok wind gusts at 76 mph with 52-foot seas.	September 20 → Governor Dunleavy requests a major disaster declaration.
September 17 Merbok produces 92 mph wind gusts, 52-foot seas, and 10-foot storm surges along the Norton Sound. Nome records a record 8.99 feet above Mean Higher High Water.	September 23 → President Biden signs a major disaster declaration.
September 20 The NWS cancels wind and flood warnings related to Merbok.	
May 2023	
	May 18 HUD allocates \$38,493,000 to the state of Alaska for unmet needs and CDBG-DR activities for disasters occurring in 2022.
July 2024	
	July 12 FEMA and the Alaska DHSEM approve nearly \$109 million to rebuild damaged infrastructure and public buildings.

1.3. Summary

Unmet needs are calculated for each of three sectors defined by HUD (Housing, Economic Revitalization and Infrastructure), following the HUD guidance in 88 FR 32046 (FR-6393-N-01, Typhoon Merbok), published on May 18, 2023. HUD defines unmet needs as the needed resources necessary to recover from a disaster after accounting for all obligated and disbursed funding for recovery efforts, including FEMA Individual and/or Public Assistance funds, insurance claims, Small Business Administration Disaster Recovery Loans and/or other funding. The primary objectives of this plan are to provide housing for low-

and moderate-income (LMI) families impacted by Typhoon Merbok in the MID areas, as well as flood and erosion control.

1.4. Unmet Need and Proposed Allocation

The proposed allocation of funds aligns with identified needs of communities within the most impacted and distressed areas and prioritizes areas with significant housing vulnerability. The allocation reflects a data-driven approach with the best currently available data. Although many Housing, Infrastructure, Mitigation and Planning disaster recovery actions were documented in Interagency Recovery Coordination (IRC) data, the October 2023 Recovery Strategy (Federal/State) DR-4672-AK, October 2023 Recovery Needs Assessment (Federal/State), and/or other sources for the MID areas, this Action Plan focuses on mitigating unmet housing need in the MID areas, based on a pre-disaster unmet need of \$1,941,800,000 for housing (see Section 2.2.1) . The CDBG-DR Mitigation set-aside focuses on flood and erosion control measures in MID areas, as these were the most frequently documented in the hazard mitigation action. Adjustments may be made in future based on feedback from citizen engagement in 2025-2026 and incorporated into a Substantial Amendment to this Action Plan.

Table 1. Unmet Need and Proposed Allocation, Typhoon Merbok 2022 CDBG-DR (June 2025)

Category	Remaining Unmet Recovery Need	% of Unmet Need	Percent Funding to be Expended in HUD and State Identified MID	Program Allocation Amount	% of Program Allocation
Administration	n/a	n/a		\$1,924,650	5%
Planning	n/a	n/a		\$5,773,950	15%
Housing	\$3,125,565	3.5%	80% HUD 20% State	\$25,423,400	64%
Infrastructure	\$63,328,109	70.8%		\$0	0.0%
Economic Revitalization	\$7,500	0.0%		\$0	0.0%
Public Service	\$3,012,951	3.4%	80% HUD 20% State	\$350,000	1%
Mitigation	\$20,000,000	22.4%	80% HUD 20% State	\$5,021,000	15%
Total	\$89,474,125	100.00%		\$38,493,000	100.00%

Note: Allocation Amount for Housing, Infrastructure, Economic Revitalization, Public Services and Mitigation includes project delivery costs and does not include administration and planning costs. As required under FR-6393-N-01, at least 80% (\$30,794,400) must be expended in HUD-identified MID areas (Bering Strait REAA, Lower Yukon REAA, Kashunamiut REAA). No more than 20% may be spent in State-identified MID areas.

2. Unmet Needs Assessment

2.1. Typhoon Merbok Overview

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced that the State of Alaska will receive \$38,493,000 (\$33,472,000 for unmet needs and \$5,021,000 for mitigation set-aside) in funding to support long-term recovery efforts following FEMA Disaster #4672, subsequent to the 2022 Alaska Severe Storm, Flooding, and Landslides (2022 Typhoon Merbok), through the Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development, Division of Community and Regional Affairs (DCRA), Grants and Funding Section. Community Development Block Grant- Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funding is designed to address needs that remain after all other assistance has been exhausted. This plan details how funds will be allocated to address remaining unmet needs in the Bering Strait, Kashunamiut, Lower Yukon, Lower Kuskokwim, Yupiit and Pribilof Islands Regional Education Attendance Areas (REAs).

When developing Disaster Recovery allocations for the Allocation Announcement Notice (AAN), HUD designates Most Impacted and Distressed (MID) communities based on concentration of damages to and losses of housing, infrastructure, businesses, and other assets from a specific disaster using data from federal agencies like FEMA and SBA. After Typhoon Merbok, HUD used FEMA damage assessment data and determined that Bering Strait REAA, Kashunamiut REAA, and Lower Yukon REAA had the highest need for funds. State grantees can also identify additional communities under their jurisdiction that suffered damage from the federally declared disaster using quantifiable data and in collaboration with partners. CDBG-DR parameters require that at least 80% of the funds must be spent in the HUD-Identified MIDs and 20% may be spent in State-Identified MIDs. Grantees can formally request additions to the HUD-Identified MID areas using supporting data showing good cause. Factors that could qualify include showing that the suggested area had similar or worse impacts compared to the existing HUD list or that the new area has high concentrations of poverty, older housing stock, or fewer recovery resources.

To meet disaster recovery needs, the statutes making CDBG-DR funds available have imposed additional requirements and authorized HUD to modify the rules that apply to the annual CDBG program to enhance flexibility and allow for quicker recovery. HUD has allocated \$38,493,000 in CDBG-DR funds to the State of Alaska in response to FEMA Disaster #4672 2022 Typhoon Merbok through the publication of 88 FR 32046 (FR-6393-N-01, Typhoon Merbok) Thursday, May 18, 2023 <https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/Portals/4/pub/CDBG-Merbok/FR-6393-N-01-AAN.pdf>. This allocation was made available through the Continuing Appropriations Act, 2023 (Pub. L. 117-180), Division A) approved September 30, 2022.

The following information was extracted and summarized from Governor Mike Dunleavy's "Request for Major Disaster Declaration, September 20, 2022," State of Alaska Letter, available at <https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/Portals/4/pub/CDBG-Merbok/Federal%20Request%202022%20West%20Coast%20Storm.pdf?ver=jeJXdXRIhO-2SPskOJGOzQ%3d%3d>.

“Under the provisions of Section 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. §§5121-5208 (Stafford Act), and implemented by 44

CFR § 206.36, I request that you declare a major disaster for the State of Alaska. This request is a result of threats to life and severe losses to property from a powerful coastal storm beginning September 15 and continuing through September 20, 2022. This event produced hurricane-force winds, higher than normal tidal ranges, and storm surges of up to 10 feet above mean sea level. The event caused wing damage and riverine and coastal flooding to approximately 40 cities and villages along an approximately 1,300-mile-long section of the Western and Northwestern Alaska coastline. As a result of the widespread nature of this event, I specifically request that your declaration include the following Regional Educational Attendance Areas (REAs) in Alaska: Bering Strait REA, Lower Yukon REA, Lower Kuskokwim REA, and Kashunamiut REA.”

Note: The Yupiit REA includes Akiachak, Akiak and Tuluksak; Akiachak and Tuluksak were included in the original description of the Lower Kuskokwim REA. This plan therefore also includes the Yupiit REA communities.

FEMA Disaster #4730

FEMA DR-4730 and subsequent funding are relevant to this report for the purposes of ensuring that funding is appropriately allocated without duplication of benefits for communities impacted by both 2022 Typhoon Merbok and 2023 Lower Yukon flooding. A total award of \$18,676,000 was allocated under Docket No. FR-65112-N-01 from Public Law 118-158 for FEMA DR-4730 (Lower Yukon Flooding) and DR-4836 (Juneau Glacial Lake Outburst Flood), including an unmet need allocation of \$16,240,000 and CDBG-DR mitigation set-aside of \$2,436,000. A total of \$10,392,969 will be allocated to the Lower Yukon communities under DR-4730. These funds will be allocated under a different Action Plan which the public will have an opportunity to comment on, as required. DR-4730 allocation is included for reference here, as it could raise the potential for duplication of benefits. Additionally, the State of Alaska may choose to exercise interchangeability of funds as authorized under Public Law 116-120 (2019).

The eight communities identified under DR-4730 are listed below. All were previously impacted by Typhoon Merbok in 2022.

1. Alakanuk
2. Emmonak
3. Kotlik
4. Marshall
5. Mountain Village
6. Nunam Iqua
7. Pilot Station
8. Russian Mission

Figure 5. FEMA Disaster #4730 2023 Lower Yukon REAA



Credit: State of Alaska Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development

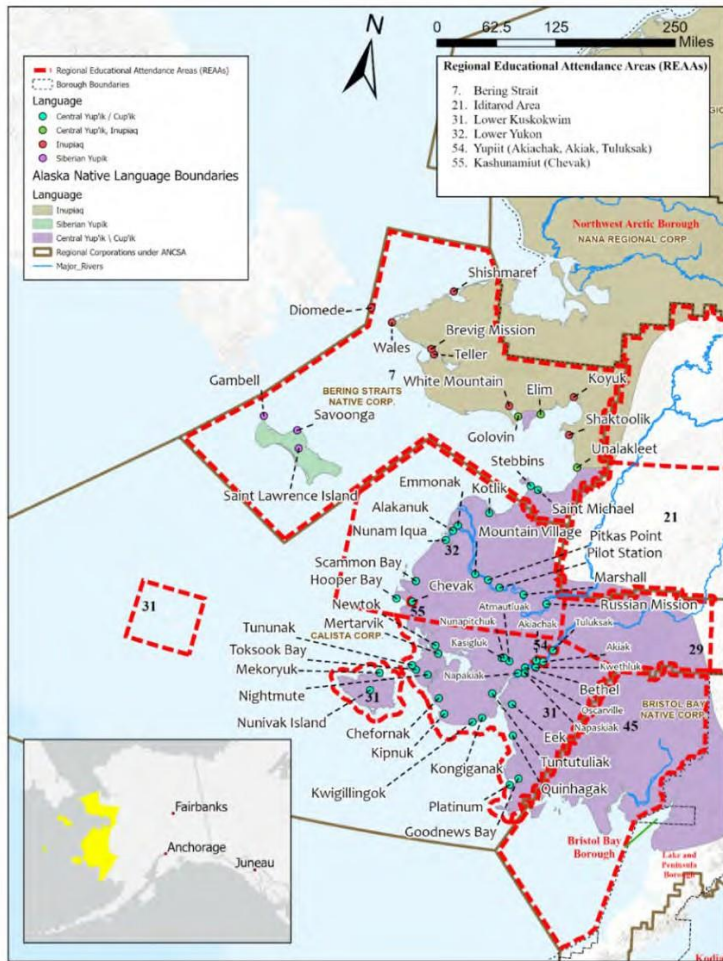
On January 16, 2025, HUD allocated \$10,392,969 in CDBG-DR funds to the State of Alaska in response to FEMA DR-4730 through the publication of the 90 FR 4759 (FR-65112-N-01, Lower Yukon & Juneau Flooding). This allocation was made available through Public Law 118-158.

Impacted Areas

The 2022 September West Coast Storm disaster affected coastal communities in the Bering Strait REAA, Lower Yukon REAA, Lower Kuskokwim REAA, Yupiit REAA, Kashunamiut REAA, and the Pribilof Islands REAA.

- The Bering Strait REAA includes the western and southern portions of the Seward Peninsula, coastal communities along the eastern Norton Sound, and St. Lawrence and Diomed Islands.
- The Lower Yukon REAA includes the Yukon Delta from Hooper Bay to Kotlik, and the Lower Yukon River up to Russian Mission.
- The Lower Kuskokwim and Yupiit REAAs include the Kuskokwim Delta coastline from Newtok to Platinum, and the Lower Kuskokwim River up to Tuluksak.
- The Kashunamiut REAA includes the community of Chevak only.

Figure 6. Merbok Impact Area and MID Communities



Source: Alaska Department of Commerce and Economic Development

Table 2. Bering Strait REAA

Village Name	DR-4672 HUD or State MID	DR-4730 2023 Flood MID	Source of Designation
Brevig Mission	HUD Identified MID	No	88 FR 32046
Diomede	HUD Identified MID	No	88 FR 32046
Elim	HUD Identified MID	No	88 FR 32046
Gambell	HUD Identified MID	No	88 FR 32046
Golovin	HUD Identified MID	No	88 FR 32046
Koyuk	HUD Identified MID	No	88 FR 32046
Nome	HUD Identified MID	No	88 FR 32046
Savoonga	HUD Identified MID	No	88 FR 32046
Shaktoolik	HUD Identified MID	No	88 FR 32046
Shishmaref	HUD Identified MID	No	88 FR 32046
St. Michael	HUD Identified MID	No	88 FR 32046
Stebbins	HUD Identified MID	No	88 FR 32046
Teller	HUD Identified MID	No	88 FR 32046
Unalakleet	HUD Identified MID	No	88 FR 32046
Wales	HUD Identified MID	No	88 FR 32046
White Mountain	HUD Identified MID	No	88 FR 32046

Federal Register Vol. 88, No. 96 available at: <https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/Portals/4/pub/CDBG-Merbok/FR-6393-N-01-AAN.pdf>. Accessed August 25, 2025.

Table 3. Lower Yukon REAA

Village Name	DR-4672 HUD or State MID	DR-4730 2023 Flood MID	Source of Designation
Alakanuk	HUD identified MID	Yes	88 FR 32046
Emmonak	HUD identified MID	Yes	88 FR 32046
Kotlik	HUD identified MID	Yes	88 FR 32046
Marshall	HUD identified MID	Yes	88 FR 32046
Mountain Village	HUD identified MID	Yes	88 FR 32046
Numan Iqua	HUD Identified MID	Yes	88 FR 32046
Pilot Station	HUD Identified MID	Yes	88 FR 32046
Russian Mission	HUD Identified MID	Yes	88 FR 32046
Scammon Bay	HUD Identified MID	No	88 FR 32046
Hooper Bay	HUD Identified MID	No	88 FR 32046
Pitka's Point	Not Identified as MID	No	

Table 4. Kashunamiut REAA

Village Name	DR-4672 HUD or State MID	DR-4730 2023 Flood MID	Source of Designation
Chevak	HUD Identified MID	No	88 FR 32046

Table 5. Lower Kuskokwim REAA

Village Name	DR-4672 HUD or State MID	DR-4730 2023 Flood MID	Source of Designation
Tununak	State Identified MID	No	4672-DR-AK Initial Notice
Toksook Bay	State Identified MID	No	4672-DR-AK Initial Notice
Mekoryuk	State Identified MID	No	4672-DR-AK Initial Notice
Nightmute	State Identified MID	No	4672-DR-AK Initial Notice
Bethel	State Identified MID	No	4672-DR-AK Initial Notice
Chefornak	State Identified MID	No	4672-DR-AK Initial Notice
Eek	State Identified MID	No	4672-DR-AK Initial Notice
Goodnews Bay	State Identified MID	No	4672-DR-AK Initial Notice
Kasigluk	State Identified MID	No	4672-DR-AK Initial Notice
Kipnuk	State Identified MID	No	4672-DR-AK Initial Notice
Kongiganak	State Identified MID	No	4672-DR-AK Initial Notice
Kwethluk	State Identified MID	No	4672-DR-AK Initial Notice
Kwigillingok	State Identified MID	No	4672-DR-AK Initial Notice
Napakiak	State Identified MID	No	4672-DR-AK Initial Notice
Napaskiak	State Identified MID	No	4672-DR-AK Initial Notice
Nunapitchuk	State Identified MID	No	4672-DR-AK Initial Notice
Oscarville	State Identified MID	No	4672-DR-AK Initial Notice
Platinum	State Identified MID	No	4672-DR-AK Initial Notice
Quinhagak	State Identified MID	No	4672-DR-AK Initial Notice
Tuntutuliak	State Identified MID	No	4672-DR-AK Initial Notice
Atmautluak	State Identified MID	No	SOA Designation
Newtok/Mertarvik	Not Identified as MID	No	

4672-DR-AK Initial Notice available at: <https://www.fema.gov/disaster-federal-register-notice/4672-dr-ak-initial-notice>. Accessed August 25, 2025.

Table 6. Yupiit REAA

Village Name	DR-4672 HUD or State MID	DR-4730 2023 Flood MID	Source of Designation
Akiachak	State Identified MID	No	SOA Designation
Akiak	State Identified MID	No	SOA Designation
Tuluksak	State Identified MID	No	4672-DR-AK Initial Notice

4672-DR-AK Initial Notice available at: <https://www.fema.gov/disaster-federal-register-notice/4672-dr-ak-initial-notice>. Accessed August 25, 2025.

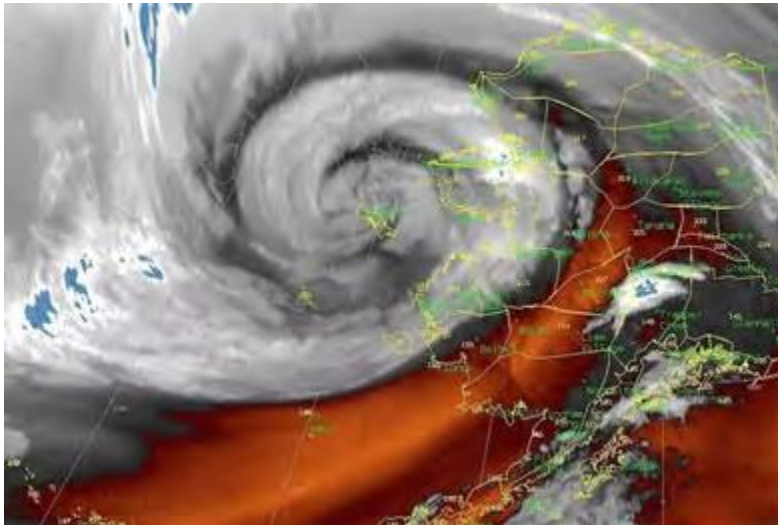
Table 7. Pribilof Islands REAA

Village Name	DR-4672 HUD or State MID	DR-4730 2023 Flood MID	Source of Designation
Saint George	State Identified MID	No	SOA Designation
Saint Paul	State Identified MID	No	SOA Designation

Background

From September 15 – 20, 2022 Typhoon Merbok devastated 1,300 miles of Alaskan coastline, impacting 52 communities in the Bering Straits, Yukon River Drainage, and Kuskokwim River Drainage watersheds. The storm started as a typhoon in atypically warm waters of the north-central Pacific Ocean. It arrived in Alaska early in the autumn storm season when there was no sea ice to protect coastal communities. The fast movement and direct trajectory of the storm contributed to extreme coastal and riverine flooding and erosion with resulting infrastructure damage and debris across western Alaska (see figure below).

Figure 7. Typhoon Merbok spins off the Alaska coast



Credit: National Weather Service

On September 15, 2022, Typhoon Merbok approached the Bering Sea, where buoy station 46035 (310 nautical miles north of Adak) recorded wind gusts of 76 mph and seas of 52 feet (NOAA National Data Buoy Center). The storm’s minimum central pressure was recorded at 937 mb, which is the lowest pressure recorded in the Bering Sea for the month of September since 1950 (NOAA Storm Events Database). The storm first impacted the Western and Central Aleutians and Pribilof Islands with

damaging winds over 70 mph in some communities. It then moved into the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta where winds gusted over 60 mph and storm surge caused significant coastal flooding. Storm surge pushed further inland along the Yukon Delta, inundating several communities along the Yukon River. As the storm reached Norton Sound and the southern Seward Peninsula, it triggered severe erosion and the worst flooding in nearly 50 years. Strong south to southwest winds resulted in significant storm surge that caused water levels to rise 8 to 13 feet above the normal high tide line, with the highest water levels were observed at Golovin with reports of flood depths over 17 feet. Impacts lessened as the weakening storm moved into the Chukchi Sea, causing flooding and erosion in communities further north along the coast (NOAA Storm Events Database).

Figure 8. Inundation after Typhoon Merbok in Golovin



Credit: Ian Gray / U.S. Coast Guard

Figure 9. Selected images from Golovin



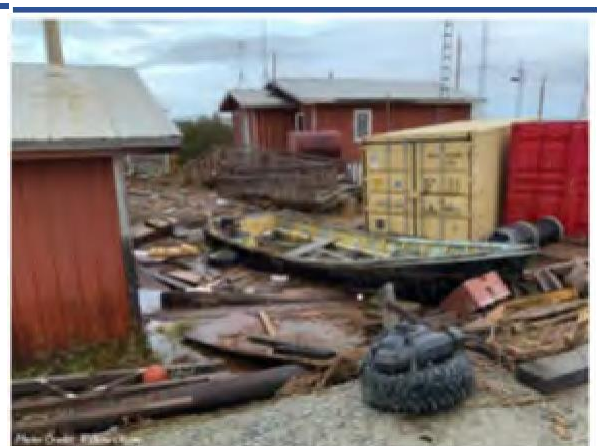
*Golovin, photo of lower village on 9/16/2022 (before)
(2023 Golovin MJHMP Update)*



*Golovin, photo of lower village on 9/17/2022 (during)
(2023 Golovin MJHMP Update)*



Golovin, 9/17/2022 (2023 Golovin MJHMP Update)



Golovin, 9/17/2022 (2023 Golovin MJHMP Update)



*Golovin, 9/17/2022 Sand inside homes
(2023 Golovin MJHMP Update)*



*Golovin, 9/17/2022 Sand inside homes
(2023 Golovin MJHMP Update)*

Impacts

High winds and storm surge from Typhoon Merbok caused significant damage across the region. Members of impacted communities lost homes, critical community infrastructure, equipment and vehicles, substantial food stocks, and subsistence hunting, fishing and gathering equipment (boats, fish racks, etc.), and camps that had been passed down through generations. The impacts from the storm and aftermath are still obvious and felt by community members more than two years later.

Some communities saw coastal protection and flood risk management measures, such as seawalls, erosion berms, breakwaters, and other structures damaged or destroyed. Shaktoolik's protective berm, which protects the village from the sea, was destroyed during the storm. In Newtok, a total of 100 feet of bank was lost due to coastal erosion. In Teller, much of the remaining seawall was damaged by storm surge. Many communities saw an exacerbation of existing erosion, prompting a need for new flood mitigation measures. These structures are critical to provide ongoing protection from future coastal storms and therefore critical to life safety.

Figure 10. Shaktoolik's berm destroyed in the storm



Credit: Gloria Andrew

Public facilities, transportation infrastructure, and utility infrastructure sustained damage due to erosion and high water. Roads, bridges, airstrips, and barge landings were inundated or washed away. Scammon Bay's airstrip was flooded, causing transportation challenges (FEMA-RNA 2023). In Chevak, severe erosion damaged the barge landing and access ramp, inhibiting the community's ability to offload supplies (FEMA-RNA 2023). In Nome, approximately 30 miles of Nome Council Road became impassable, including a significant ocean breach of the roadway (Alaska DOT&PF 2022). Energy infrastructure sustained damages during the storm, causing widespread power outages. In Golovin, power infrastructure was damaged for an extended period and food stored in freezers was spoiled. Hooper Bay

sustained damage to its power grid after recording water nine feet above the highest high tide line and wind gusts of 67 mph (UAF-ACCAP 2022). Given the prevalence of electricity-dependent home heating stoves in western Alaska, power outages are especially damaging because homes cannot be heated, and plumbing may freeze. In summary, the following transportation and utility infrastructure sustained severe impacts:

- **Public roads and bridges**, including critical access routes to airstrips, sheltering points, and other important areas due to flooding and/or debris deposition. Damages affected critical access routes, impacts to local commerce, and had an adverse effect on critical life safety support functions.
- **Airstrips**, including runways, parking aprons, access roads, helipads, and airport support structures. Due to the remote nature of Alaska, runways are the primary transportation access points and therefore are critical to life safety functions.
- **Power supply**, including generators, power plants, land and undersea transmission lines, and bulk fuel tanks to supply this infrastructure. Damage to power systems critically impacted the community's ability to provide heat to public buildings and private homes. In the arctic, heat is a critical life safety function.
- **Public facilities**, including water and wastewater treatment facilities and bulk fuel tanks. Damages affected the ability to provide safe water and critical heat to residents in the affected area.

Figure 11. Oceanic breach of highway in Nome



Credit: Shea Oliver / Alaska DOT&PF

Damages to wastewater infrastructure and subsequent contaminant releases were widespread in Merbok's aftermath. Flooding caused Nightmute's landfill and sewage lagoon to be breached, depositing trash and contaminants into the surrounding wetlands and river (FEMA-RNA 2023). Solid waste disposal systems were compromised or overwhelmed in many communities. In Koyuk, storm debris remained on the beach for over a year after the event. In St. Michael, storm surge exposed old dump sites along the water's edge, causing waste to fall into the water (FEMA-RNA 2023). Damages in

Elim included losing two sections of road (3-4 miles) of Moses Pt and a state road and seawater infiltrated the community's drinking water well (Kawerak 2023).

Figure 12. Storm Debris in Golovin on September 20, 2022



Credit: Jeremy Edwards / FEMA

Personal property, including homes and boats needed for subsistence activities, suffered severe damage due to the storm. Fish camps, fish drying racks, cabins, and other subsistence equipment are critical for sustaining livelihoods and cultural traditions throughout rural Alaska. In Golovin, eight to ten generational subsistence cabins were damaged or destroyed by Merbok (FEMA-RNA 2023). In Chevak, 90% of fishing boats were lost (UAF-ACCAP 2022). Elim reported losing areas used for subsistence berry gathering. As of September 20, 2022 the State PDA identified 69 homes with wind or flooding damage. 28 other structures, including schools, cabins, warehouses, and outbuildings were also damaged.

Damage to personal and community infrastructure occurred in largely Alaska Native, remote, and isolated regions. The communities affected by this storm have a high percentage of families at or below the federal poverty level, and many are subsistence-based. For example, the communities within the Bering Strait REAA reflect the economic situation along the entire Western Coast of Alaska. For small communities within this area (i.e., populations less than 700 residents), poverty levels range from 14.7 to 52.1 percent and unemployment rates range from 13.8 to 38.7 percent. Private property insurance is largely unavailable or cost prohibitive; therefore, almost all residents with reported home damage were likely uninsured against storm loss.

Figure 13. Fish Camp in Nome Sustains Damages



Credit: Jeremy Edwards / FEMA

The storm caused damages to cemeteries, churches, and artifacts. While some repairs have been made, there is a need to identify alternative cemetery locations, fix damages to crosses, reinter remains, repair churches, and address erosion threats to existing locations.

The damage caused by Typhoon Merbok resulted in substantial, compounding impacts for Tribal and local communities. Communities were isolated as roads and airstrips became impassable due to washouts, debris, and high water. There were significant disruptions to essential community services, utilities, and infrastructure across the Bering Straits, Yukon River Drainage, and Kuskokwim River Drainage watersheds. Nome, Golovin, Koyuk, and Unalakleet were among the communities hardest hit by the storm. They suffered road washouts, homes pushed off their foundations, sand and sewage being deposited along roads and into peoples' homes, broken windows and doors, damaged bridges, telecommunications and power outages, and displaced residents. Residents in White Mountain, for example, lost personal property as it was washed down the Niukluk River, and \$25,000 in frozen food was lost when power outages caused freezers to fail. In the village of Elim, flood waters disrupted water treatment and sewage systems, enabling *e. coli* to contaminate drinking water and causing an intake of salt water into water lines. The Native Village of Golovin was among the hardest hit, losing the entirety of its winter food supply and multiple residences due to hurricane-force winds and severe flooding (State HMP 2023). Recovery operations raced against the rapidly approaching winter season in western Alaska.

Long-term impacts from Typhoon Merbok include significant infrastructure and community challenges, such as the need to relocate or elevate homes vulnerable to erosion and flooding. Drinking water, wastewater and energy systems need to be repaired and upgraded. Public infrastructure such as roads, harbors/barge landing areas, airstrips, and flood mitigation measures require reinforcement to future severe weather events. Families and communities are still recovering from losses to subsistence areas

and equipment. Culturally significant places such as cemeteries are threatened by erosion and require careful relocation or other protective measures.

Federal, State, and Local Actions

The State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) and the State Emergency Operations Plan were activated to Preparedness Level 2 - Heightened Awareness on September 14, 2022, in response to the approaching storm. This level was increased to Preparedness Level 3 - Actual Event on September 17, 2022.

The Alaska Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHS&EM) coordinated the State's response to local requests, with resources from the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS); Department of Public Safety (DPS); Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC); Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development (DCCED); and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR); Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF); the Alaska National Guard; local agency support (Kawerak), and multiple voluntary agencies.

On September 17, 2022, Governor Dunleavy declared a State Disaster and notified the Alaska State Legislature of funding for immediate response costs up to \$10,000,000 from the State Disaster Relief Fund per Alaska Statute 26.23.020.

The SEOC was activated and staffed to Preparedness Level 3 over the weekend of September 16-18, 2022. This measure allowed state, federal, military, and non-profit response and relief agencies to coordinate their responses. Throughout the event, the SEOC maintained expanded staffing and monitored the weather and the storms' impact to over 50 coastal communities.

The State partnered quickly with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to streamline collaboration and cooperation during the event. Serendipitously, FEMA Region 10 and National Incident Management Assistance Team (IMAT) personnel were in Anchorage on September 14 to participate in a state preparedness exercise; they were able to transition quickly to assist the State with incident management and federal agency coordination.

Emergency evacuations of at-risk persons were performed throughout the storms. It is estimated that approximately 500 residents were sheltered in community facilities, and an unknown number sheltered-in-place in impacted communities.

On September 20, 2022, Governor Dunleavy requested a major disaster declaration due to a severe storm, flooding, and landslides. On September 23, 2022, President Biden issued a major disaster declaration under the authority of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq. (the "Stafford Act"). It authorized the provision of emergency protective measures (Category B) under the Public Assistance program in the designated areas of Bering Strait Regional Educational Attendance Area (REAA), Kashunamiut REAA, Lower Kuskokwim REAA, and Lower Yukon REAA. It made Individual Assistance available to affected individuals and households in these regions. It authorized Hazard Mitigation Grant Program assistance throughout the State of Alaska (FEMA-RNA 2023).

On September 23, 2022, Amendment #01 was issued to extend the deadline for filing applications for physical damages as a result of this disaster to 12/06/2022. On November 21, 2022, Amendment #02

was issued announcing the addition of debris removal (Category A) and permanent work (Categories C-G) for Bering Strait REAA, Kashunamiut REAA, Lower Kuskokwim REAA, and Lower Yukon REAA and Public Assistance (Categories A-G) for Pribilof Islands REAA. The deadline for Public Assistance RPAs was extended until December 23, 2022 (FEMA-RNA 2023).

Public funds have been allocated and deployed in the region to support recovery and rebuilding efforts, but gaps remain. As recently as July 2024, FEMA and the Alaska Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management approved nearly \$109 million to help rebuild infrastructure and public buildings damaged in the storm and to reimburse costs communities sustained deploying life-saving emergency measures during and after the storm. Funds have helped and will continue to help repair roadways, culverts, berms, and other similar projects (FEMA Press Release 2024).

The reality of cascading severe weather events and vulnerabilities exacerbated by changing climate have brought a new perspective on risk, preparedness, and the need for Alaska to achieve a heightened level of resilience to be able to lead and manage holistic recovery.

The State's most recent Hazard Mitigation Plan in 2023 (State HMP) includes observations of milder winters, increased intensity of winter storms, and rapid decline in Bering Sea ice cover in western Alaska. The State HMP states that the northern and western coasts of Alaska are particularly vulnerable to the combination of flooding and erosion. It is difficult to predict the frequency of future flood hazard events, as monitoring networks are sparse, and it is likely that many historic events have gone unreported across the vast coastline. According to the State HMP, it is anticipated that locations already vulnerable to flooding will flood with similar or more frequency in the future. Additionally, sea ice that annually forms offshore of Alaska's western and northern coasts is expected to form later and break up earlier in the year, reducing protection from fall and winter storms and associated impacts from strong seas.

Western Alaska is vulnerable to other natural disasters, described in the Mitigation Needs Assessment (MNA) section of this CDBG-DR Public Action Plan (PAP). In developing the MNA, FEMA, local and tribal governments, *USGS*, *DGGS*, *NWS*, and *UAF* were consulted to understand the current and projected natural hazards and risks faced by the state and the most impacted and distressed areas. These risks and hazards will be factored into recovery and mitigation programming.

2.2. Housing Unmet Need

This section provides an assessment of the region’s housing profile, damage to housing caused by the September 2022 Typhoon Merbok disaster, and the remaining unmet needs related to housing recovery. CDBG-DR funds will support efforts to restore, protect, and strengthen housing in impacted communities. Outlined are local housing recovery priorities, addressing both urgent and long-term needs to reduce future displacement risks and ensure long-term housing stability for residents.

2.2.1. Pre-disaster Unmet Need

The table below shows the pre-existing immediate unmet housing need in the affected communities due to overcrowding and units in need of rehabilitation or replacement due to age of housing stock and/or lack of plumbing and kitchen facilities (see Methodology section). As noted in Section 2.2.7. Low- and Moderate-Income (LMI) Analysis, more than 70% of the total population in MID areas qualify as Low-to-Moderate Income, demonstrating the high need for affordable housing vis-à-vis market rate housing in the MID regions.

Table 8. Estimated Pre-Disaster Unmet Housing Need (2023)

MID (Most Impacted and Distressed) Areas	New Units Needed Due to Overcrowding	Rehab Units Needed	Cost of Total Immediate Unmet Housing Need Pre-Disaster
HUD-identified			
Bering Strait REAA	873	279	\$579,600,000
Kashunamiut REAA	41	10	\$26,600,000
Lower Yukon REAA	580	149	\$377,800,000
State-identified			
Lower Kuskokwim REAA	1333	446	\$889,000,000
Yupit REAA	100	21	\$64,200,000
Pribilof Islands REAA	5	8	\$4,600,000
Total	2,932	913	\$1,941,800,000

Data Sources: AVCP RHA Housing Needs Forecast (2025) for Kashunamiut, Lower Yukon, Lower Kuskokwim and Yupit REAAs. The same methodology used in the AVCP RHA Housing Needs Assessment was applied to the Bering Strait and Pribilof Islands REAAs. Both assessments use 2023 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.

2.2.2. Disaster Damage and Impacts

Typhoon Merbok exacerbated extreme housing challenges in most of the impacted communities. The MID areas include communities with some of the highest overcrowding in the nation: 43 percent of households are overcrowded or severely overcrowded in the Yukon-Kuskokwim region (includes the Kashunamiut REAA, Lower Yukon REAA, Lower Kuskokwim REAA and Yupiit REAA), according to the United States Census Bureau (2023 American Community Survey 5-Yr Estimates). In the Bering Strait REAA, an average of 37.7 percent of households are overcrowded or severely overcrowded, ranging from 17.2 percent in Nome to 61.5 percent in St. Michael (2023 American Community Survey 5-Yr Estimates). Documented housing impacts include home relocations, elevations and leveling, foundation repairs, general home repairs, mold remediation, and full rebuilds. The table below summarizes these housing impacts and shows that both interim and permanent housing are needed for disaster recovery: interim housing to alleviate severe overcrowding exacerbated by the destruction or damage to existing homes while recovery efforts are underway, as well as permanent housing to alleviate overcrowding as well as to replace homes that were destroyed or damaged beyond repair.

Table 9. Housing Damage and Recovery Needs by Most Impacted and Distressed (MID) Regions

MID (Most Impacted and Distressed) Areas	Damage Distribution (FEMA IA)	Common Project Needs (FEMA IRC)
HUD-identified		
Bering Strait REAA	342 inspections: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 destroyed (1%) • 12 major damage (4%) • 87 moderate damage (25%) 	Repairs, relocations, new construction, weatherization, stabilization
Kashunamiut REAA	118 inspections: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0 destroyed • 0 major damage • 25 moderate damage (21%) 	Repairs, relocations, replacements, community mapping, stabilization
Lower Yukon REAA	294 inspections: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 destroyed (1%) • 2 major damage (1%) • 105 moderate damage (36%) 	Stabilization, weatherization
State-identified		
Lower Kuskokwim REAA	298 inspections: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 destroyed (1%) • 2 major damage (1%) • 96 moderate damage (32%) 	Relocation, replacement, repair, new construction
Yupiit REAA	2 inspections: no recorded damage	No data
Pribilof Islands REAA	No data	No data

Data Sources: FEMA Individual Assistance (IA) inspection data (2022–2023); FEMA Interagency Recovery Coordination (IRC) trax export (August 2025).

Bering Strait REAA. FEMA Individual Assistance data show 342 housing inspections, with 4 homes destroyed, 12 sustaining major damage, and 87 sustaining moderate damage. IRC recovery projects confirm that many communities, including Stebbins, face needs for home repairs, relocations, and new construction, alongside weatherization and stabilization to prevent future storm damage.

Lower Yukon REAA. FEMA data show 294 housing inspections, with 1 home destroyed, 2 sustaining major damage, and 105 sustaining moderate damage. Communities such as Hooper Bay, Emmonak, Kotlik, and Scammon Bay reported widespread impacts. IRC project descriptions highlight homes that are unlivable due to flooding and erosion, requiring repairs, relocations, and replacements. In Scammon Bay, housing recovery efforts include community mapping to guide rebuilding priorities, while in Hooper Bay, damages prompted planning for full infrastructure replacement alongside housing stabilization.

Kashunamiut REAA. FEMA recorded 118 inspections, with 25 homes sustaining moderate damage. IRC projects in Chevak are focused on housing stabilization and weatherization. Overcrowding in the Kashunamiut REAA is among the highest in the nation, meaning even a relatively small number of damaged or destroyed units has outsized impacts on available shelter.

Lower Kuskokwim REAA. FEMA recorded 298 inspections, with 1 home destroyed, 2 sustaining major damage, and 96 sustaining moderate damage. IRC projects in Nightmute, Newtok, Napaskiak, Kwigillingok, and Kipnuk point to the need for home repairs, relocations, and new construction. Toksook Bay identified housing that was completely unlivable and requiring replacement. These projects reflect the dual needs of addressing immediate storm damage and mitigating long-term risks from erosion and flooding.

Yupit and Pribilof Islands REAAs. In the Yupit REAA (Akiachak and Tuluksak), FEMA recorded two inspections, with no homes classified as destroyed, major, or moderate damage. No IRC housing projects were logged in this dataset. For the Pribilof Islands, no FEMA housing inspections were recorded, and no IRC housing recovery needs were noted.

Remaining Unmet Need for Housing

The total remaining estimated unmet need for housing in the MID areas is shown in the table below. The pre-disaster immediate unmet housing need (section 2.2.1) is added to the estimate of unmet housing need from disaster impacts to arrive at the total remaining estimated unmet housing need. Unmet need from disaster impacts is calculated using the Total Verified Loss from FEMA or the State of Alaska Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHS&EM) for Individual Assistance (IA) programs, less recovery assistance awarded from key state, federal and private funding sources to avoid duplication of benefits (DOB). Estimates of disaster impact are low vis-à-vis the population of MID areas partly because people did not apply for federal and state programs, and partly because not all relevant data are available at the time of writing (see details in the following subsection).

Table 10. Estimated Remaining Unmet Housing Need

MID (Most Impacted and Distressed) Areas	Estimated Unmet Housing Need Pre-Disaster	Estimated Unmet Housing Need from Disaster Impacts	Total Remaining Estimated Unmet Housing Need
HUD-identified			
Bering Strait REAA	\$579,600,000	\$1,981,639	\$581,581,639
Kashunamiut REAA	\$26,600,000	\$97,649	\$26,697,649
Lower Yukon REAA	\$377,800,000	\$550,567	\$378,350,567
State-identified			
Lower Kuskokwim REAA	\$889,000,000	\$495,710	\$889,495,710
Yupit REAA	\$64,200,000	\$0	\$64,200,000
Pribilof Islands REAA	\$4,600,000	\$0	\$4,600,000
Total	\$1,941,800,000	\$3,125,565	\$1,944,925,565

Data Sources: AVCP RHA Housing Needs Forecast (2025), 2023 American Community Survey 5-year estimates, Total Verified Loss and Payment records for FEMA IA, Alaska DHS&EM IA, SBA Home Disaster Recovery Loans, NFIP, private insurance.

Methodology and Limitations of Data

Following a state and federally declared disaster, joint Preliminary Damage Assessments (JPDA) are conducted to establish the need for federal assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the State of Alaska Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHS&EM) Individual Assistance (IA) Programs. Insured homeowners may apply to their insurance company for damages. Homeowners may also be referred by FEMA to the Small Business Administration (SBA) for Home Disaster Recovery Loans. Other sources of recovery funding include the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), although only a few of the communities impacted by Typhoon Merbok participate in the NFIP. It is crucial to highlight that although severe damage was documented in the October 2023 Recovery Needs Assessment (FEMA, State of Alaska DHS&EM)¹ to homes and properties throughout the impacted REAAs, "not all impacted residents applied, and gaps remain." Because many residents in the affected area did not apply for these assistance programs, more information about unmet recovery needs will be identified through planned outreach to MID communities in 2025-2026.

FEMA Individual Assistance (IA) Program

FEMA Individual Assistance data provides a snapshot of housing damage and recovery across the HUD- and State-identified Most Impacted and Distressed (MID) areas following Typhoon Merbok. Across four REAAs—Bering Strait, Kashunamiut, Lower Yukon, and Lower Kuskokwim—nearly \$8 million was recommended for housing-related repairs and personal property losses. Of that, approximately \$6.4 million was disbursed to households through FEMA awards. The resulting unmet need of nearly \$2 million reflects the gap between verified losses and what was awarded, adjusted to exclude

¹ FEMA, State of Alaska DHS&EM (2023). Recovery Needs Assessment: DR-4672-AK. Available at: <https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/Portals/4/pub/CDBG-Merbok/DR-4672-AK%20Recovery%20Needs%20Assessment%20Second%20Edition%20FINAL%20DRAFT.pdf>. Accessed July 29, 2025.

overpayment anomalies and offset by known SBA disbursements. Notably, this estimate is likely conservative. FEMA’s dataset did not include household-level damage assessments for communities in the Pribilof Islands REAA. As a result, no unmet need could be calculated for that area using FEMA Individual Assistance data alone. The totals shown here reflect verified losses and awards as reported, grouped by Regional Educational Attendance Area (REAA) for consistency with other sections of this plan.

Table 11. FEMA Individual Assistance Unmet Need for Typhoon Merbok (2022)

MID (Most Impacted and Distressed) Areas	Total Recommended	Total Paid	Total Remaining Unmet Need
HUD-identified			
Bering Strait REAA	\$3,341,057	\$2,381,788	\$1,043,714
Kashunamiut REAA	\$864,987	\$814,225	\$83,935
Lower Yukon REAA	\$2,562,138	\$2,142,656	\$550,567
State-identified			
Lower Kuskokwim REAA	\$1,189,956	\$1,023,921	\$296,735
Yupit REAA	\$11,300	\$11,300	\$0
Pribilof Islands REAA	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total			\$1,974,951

Data Source(s): FEMA Individual Assistance for 2022 Typhoon Merbok AK-DR-4672. Available:

<https://data.sba.gov/dataset/office-of-capital-access>. Accessed: July 24, 2025. Note that the communities of Akiachak and Tuluksak are within the Yupit REAA but were recorded under Lower Kusko REAA in the FEMA Individual Assistance assessment for the 2022 Typhoon Merbok.

State of Alaska Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHS&EM) Individual Assistance (IA) Program

The State of Alaska Individual Assistance (IA) Program provides financial assistance to disaster survivors through grants to assist individuals and families in a declared disaster area with serious losses not covered or not fully covered by their insurance or other financial sources or means. The program provides financial assistance to individuals or families whose:

- Primary residence was destroyed or damaged
- Only means of transportation was destroyed or damaged, when alternative is not available
- Essential personal property was destroyed, damaged, or lost
- Medical/funeral/dental expenses were incurred as a direct result of the disaster

The DHS&EM IA Program is initiated when the Governor of Alaska declares a disaster. If a State disaster declaration is followed by a federal declaration for the same event, individuals may apply for assistance from both the State (DHS&EM) and Federal (FEMA) IA programs.

Table 12. State of Alaska Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHS&EM) Individual Assistance (IA) for 2022 September West Coast Storm

MID (Most Impacted and Distressed) Areas	Total Recommended	Total Paid	Total Remaining Unmet Need
HUD-identified			
Bering Strait REAA	\$1,260,513	\$485,202	\$775,311
Kashunamiut REAA	\$289,089	\$107,669	\$181,420
Lower Yukon REAA	\$519,675	\$272,445	\$247,230
State-identified			
Lower Kuskokwim REAA	\$320,255	\$121,280	\$198,975
Yupit REAA	\$0	\$0	\$0
Pribilof Islands REAA	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$2,389,532	\$986,596	\$1,402,936

Data Source: State of Alaska Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHS&EM)

U.S. Small Business Administration Disaster Recovery Home Loans

Small Business Administration (SBA) for Home Disaster Recovery Loans can provide funds for repair or replacement of damaged homes (up to \$200,000 for a primary residence) and personal property (up to \$40,000) that is not covered by private insurance or the Individual Assistance programs. Borrowers may also borrow up to 20% of the verified real estate damage for improvements that help prevent future damage. The U.S. Small Business Administration received 31 Disaster Recovery Home Loan applications related to the event, resulting in 10 offers totaling \$234,600; only three loans were disbursed, totaling \$59,100—indicating limited uptake of SBA recovery resources among affected households. The table below shows the aggregated SBA data available at the time of writing, which indicates that some homeowners applied for SBA loans. However, it does not indicate the type of housing, REAA, or any identifiable detail that would allow the calculation of remaining unmet need for specific types of housing.

Table 13. Small Business Administration (SBA) Individual Assistance Disaster Home Recovery Loan Applications for Disaster Declaration AK-00055 Severe Storm, Flooding, and Landslides (2022)

Loan Type	Initial Application Count	Full Application Count	Offer Count	Offer Amount	Disbursement Count	Disbursement Amount
Disaster Home Recovery Loan	31	31	10	\$234,600	3	\$59,100

Source: Small Business Administration (SBA). Available: <https://data.sba.gov/dataset/office-of-capital-access>. Accessed: July 24, 2025.

Table 14. Small Business Administration (SBA) Individual Assistance Disaster Home Recovery Loans Unmet Need for Disaster Declaration AK-00055 Severe Storm, Flooding, and Landslides (2022)

MID (Most Impacted and Distressed) Areas	Offer Count	Total Verified Loss	Disbursement	Remaining Unmet Need
HUD-identified				
Bering Strait REAA	2	\$201,780	\$53,600	\$148,180
Kashunamiut REAA	1	\$19,214	\$5,500	\$13,714
Lower Yukon REAA	0	\$0	\$0	\$0
State-identified				
Lower Kuskokwim REAA	0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Yupit REAA	0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Pribilof Islands REAA	0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	3	\$220,994	\$59,100	\$161,894

Source: Small Business Administration (SBA).

National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)

The National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) plays a limited role in the region affected by Typhoon Merbok. Of the Most Impacted and Distressed (MID) communities identified in this plan, only Emmonak, Nome, Bethel, and Shishmaref participate in the NFIP. Even in these communities, household-level enrollment is likely low due to affordability challenges, low availability of coverage, and limited awareness of flood risk prior to the disaster.

At the time of this plan, no individual NFIP claims data were available for analysis. As such, it is not possible to assess the degree to which NFIP payouts may have reduced unmet housing need. However, consistent with observed regional patterns and State reporting, it is assumed that most affected households did not have flood insurance coverage. For this reason, NFIP benefits were not deducted from FEMA-based unmet need estimates, and any potential duplication of benefits will be addressed during program implementation, once claim-level data becomes available.

Private Insurance

Private property insurance plays a minimal role in disaster recovery for communities impacted by Typhoon Merbok. As noted in Governor Dunleavy's request for a federal disaster declaration, "private property insurance is largely unavailable or cost prohibitive; therefore, almost all residents with reported home damage were likely uninsured against storm loss." This statement reflects the broader reality of Western Alaska's housing market, where high poverty rates, small community sizes, and limited access to insurance products make homeowner and rental insurance rare.

While the FEMA Individual Assistance dataset includes yes/no indicators for homeowners and other insurance coverage, it does not contain information on the value of claims filed, received, or denied. As a result, the extent to which private insurance may have offset repair costs cannot be reliably quantified. Given these data limitations, and the strong likelihood that most residents lacked meaningful insurance coverage, this plan does not deduct insurance payouts from calculated unmet housing needs.

This conservative assumption aligns with federal guidance to avoid underestimating need in low-insurance environments and reflects the severe resource constraints facing most storm-affected households.

2.2.3. Single-family vs. Multi-family Needs; Owner-occupied vs. Tenant

Table 15. Tenure and Housing Type of Impacted Units by Most Impacted and Distressed (MID) Regions

MID (Most Impacted and Distressed) Areas	Total Impacted Units	Owner-Occupied	Renter-Occupied	Single-Family/Duplex	Apartments	Mobile Homes
HUD-identified						
Bering Strait REAA	110	95 (86%)	15 (14%)	101 (92%)	5 (5%)	4 (4%)
Lower Yukon REAA and Kashunamiut REAA	135	128 (95%)	7 (5%)	129 (96%)	1 (1%)	5 (4%)
State-identified						
Lower Kuskokwim REAA	99	97 (98%)	2 (2%)	99 (100%)	0	0
Yupit REAA and Pribilof Islands REAA	No data	No data	No data	No data	No data	No data

Source: FEMA Individual Assistance for 2022 Typhoon Merbok AK-DR-4672. Available: <https://data.sba.gov/dataset/office-of-capital-access>. Accessed: July 24, 2025. Note that the communities of Akiachak and Tuluksak are within the Yupit REAA but were recorded under Lower Kusko REAA in the FEMA Individual Assistance assessment for the 2022 Typhoon Merbok.

More information about disaster impacts will be incorporated into the unmet needs assessment following planned outreach in 2025-2026 (see 3.1 Citizen Participation).

Definitions

Affordable Rents: For all REAAs, affordable rent is defined as a monthly housing cost (including utilities) that does not exceed 30% of a household’s gross monthly income. To maintain consistency with HUD requirements, this plan uses the HUD-published 80% Area Median Income (AMI) limit for a 4-person household as the benchmark for affordability.

HUD-identified MID (Most impacted and distressed) areas

Bering Strait REAA (Nome Census Area)

- (1) **Affordable Rents:** \$1,800 per month
- (2) **Income Limits for Tenants of rental housing that is rehabilitated, reconstructed, or constructed with CDBG-DR funds:** Less than 80% of the Area Median Income, or **\$75,200 per year** for this REAA.
- (3) **Minimum Affordability Period:** Twenty (20) years.

Kashunamiut REAA (Kusilvak Census Area)

- (1) **Affordable Rents:** \$1,800 per month
- (2) **Income Limits for Tenants of rental housing that is rehabilitated, reconstructed, or constructed with CDBG-DR funds:** Less than 80% of the Area Median Income, or **\$75,200** for this REAA.
- (3) **Minimum Affordability Period:** Twenty (20) years.

Lower Yukon REAA (Kusilvak Census Area)

- (1) **Affordable Rents:** \$1,800 per month
- (2) **Income Limits for Tenants of rental housing that is rehabilitated, reconstructed, or constructed with CDBG-DR funds:** Less than 80% of the Area Median Income, or **\$75,200** for this REAA.
- (3) **Minimum Affordability Period:** Twenty (20) years.

State-identified MID (Most impacted and distressed) areas

Lower Kuskokwim REAA (Bethel Census Area)

- (1) **Affordable Rents:** \$2,096 per month
- (2) **Income Limits for Tenants of rental housing that is rehabilitated, reconstructed, or constructed with CDBG-DR funds:** Less than 80% of the Area Median Income, or **\$83,850** for this REAA.
- (3) **Minimum Affordability Period:** Twenty (20) years.

Yupiit REAA (Bethel Census Area)

- (1) **Affordable Rents:** \$2,096 per month
- (2) **Income Limits for Tenants of rental housing that is rehabilitated, reconstructed, or constructed with CDBG-DR funds:** Less than 80% of the Area Median Income, or **\$83,850** for this REAA.
- (3) **Minimum Affordability Period:** Twenty (20) years.

Pribilof Islands REAA (Aleutians West Census Area)

- (1) **Affordable Rents:** \$2,247 per month
- (2) **Income Limits for Tenants of rental housing that is rehabilitated, reconstructed, or constructed with CDBG-DR funds:** Less than 80% of the Area Median Income, or **\$89,900** for this REAA.
- (3) **Minimum Affordability Period:** Twenty (20) years.

Table 16. Definitions for Single-family vs. Multi-family Needs; Owner-occupied vs. Tenant, by REAA

MID (Most Impacted and Distressed) Areas	Affordable Rents (Per Month)	CDBG-DR Funded Rental Housing - Tenant Income Limits*		Minimum Affordability Period
HUD-identified				
Bering Strait REAA	\$1,800	< 80% AMI	< \$75,200	20 years
Kashunamiut REAA	\$1,800	< 80% AMI	< \$75,200	20 years
Lower Yukon REAA	\$1,800	< 80% AMI	< \$75,200	20 years
State-identified				
Lower Kuskokwim REAA	\$2,096	< 80% AMI	< \$83,850	20 years
Yupit REAA	\$2,096	< 80% AMI	< \$83,850	20 years
Pribilof Islands REAA	\$2,247	< 80% AMI	< \$89,900	20 years

Data Source(s): U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), FY 2023 Income Limits Documentation System for Nome, Kusilvak, Bethel, and Aleutians West Census Areas; HUD Exchange, CDBG Low/Mod Income Data (LMISD)

*Refers to "Income Limits for Tenants of rental housing that is rehabilitated, reconstructed, or constructed with CDBG-DR funds"

Note: Yupit REAA was included in the original description of the Lower Kuskokwim REAA.

2.2.4. Public Housing and Affordable Housing

The Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC) operates two public housing developments in the MID regions: Bering Vue in Nome and Bethel Heights in Bethel. Building inspection reports, estimates of any remaining repairs needed and estimated costs were requested from the AHFC, which responded that no public housing was damaged by Typhoon Merbok. More information about damages and unmet recovery needs will continue to be identified through planned outreach to MID communities and service providers in 2025-2026.

Public Housing Authorities Damaged

Table 17. Multifamily Assisted Housing, all HUD- and State-identified MID areas

Type of Damage	# of Properties	# of Units	# of Units Assisted	# of Units Awaiting Assistance	Remaining Unmet Need
Minor-Low	0	0	0	0	\$0
Minor-High	0	0	0	0	\$0
Major-Low	0	0	0	0	\$0
Major-High	0	0	0	0	\$0
Severe	0	0	0	0	\$0
Total	2	0	0	0	\$0

Data Source: Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC)

Table 18. Public Housing Authorities Damaged, by REAA

County/ Municipalities	Total # of PHA's	Total PHA's Damaged	# Of Units Damaged	Remaining Unmet Need
Bering Strait REAA	1	0	0	\$0
Kashunamiut REAA	0	0	0	\$0
Lower Yukon REAA	0	0	0	\$0
Lower Kuskokwim REAA	1	0	0	\$0
Yupit REAA	0	0	0	\$0
Pribilof Islands REAA	0	0	0	\$0
Total	2	0	0	\$0

Data Source: Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC)

2.2.5. Grantee Demographics and Disaster-impacted Populations

The population impacted by the disaster is disproportionately American Indian or Alaska Native (87.4%), significantly higher than their share of the state population (13.8%). Impacted areas also have higher shares of young children, individuals with disabilities, and elderly residents compared to statewide averages.

Table 19. Grantee Demographics and Disaster Impacted Populations (2023)

Demographics	Areawide (State) Estimate	Area Wide (State) Percent	Disaster Declaration Estimate (HUD + State-MIDs)	Disaster Declaration (HUD + State- MIDs) PERCENT	HUD MID	HUD MID Percent
Total Population	733,971	100.00%	34,165	100.00%	16,753	100.00%
Under 5 Years	47,825	6.5%	3,646	10.67%	1,781	10.63%
65 Years and Over	97,815	13.3%	2,658	7.78%	1,256	7.50%
Population with a Disability	92,451	13.1%	4,105	12.02%	2,080	12.42%
White or Caucasian	445,545	60.7%	4,727	13.84%	2,637	15.74%
Black or African American	22,774	3.1%	514	1.50%	308	1.84%
American Indian or Alaska Native	101,226	13.8%	29,972	87.73%	14,636	87.36%
Asian	47,099	6.4%	533	1.56%	283	1.69%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	11,379	1.6%	181	0.53%	48	0.29%

Demographics	Areawide (State) Estimate	Area Wide (State) Percent	Disaster Declaration Estimate (HUD + State-MIDs)	Disaster Declaration (HUD + State-MIDs) PERCENT	HUD MID	HUD MID Percent
Other	16,144	2.2%	340	1.00%	224	1.34%

Data Source(s): 2023 ACS 5-year Estimates, Tables DP05 and S1810

Elders as a Vulnerable Population

Older adults (age 65+) make up a significant share of households in the MID areas (see table below); many live alone or in overcrowded households. Many elders face compounding risks from recurring water/sewer disruptions, reduced access to emergency medical care as erosion threatens evacuation routes/airstrips, and disaster-related mental-health stress — all occurring against already high rates of overcrowding, in some areas more than 12 times the national average (ANTHC Unmet Needs Assessment, 2024).

FEMA IA records confirm the disaster’s direct impact on elder households, with households containing at least one person 65+ present in the moderate, major, and destroyed damage categories. These patterns point to priority needs for accessible repairs, interim accommodation during repair/replacement, and resilient replacement housing for elder households.

Table 20. Households with Older Adults (65+) and Householders 65+ Living Alone, by REAA

MID (MOST IMPACTED AND DISTRESSED) AREAS	Total Number of Households	Number of Households with One or More People 65 Years and Over	Percent of Total Households with One or More People 65 Years and Over	Number of Households where Householder Living Alone - 65 Years and Over	Percent of Total Households where Householder Living Alone - 65 Years and Over
HUD-identified					
Bering Strait REAA	2,699	664	25%	176	7%
Kashunamiut REAA	104	21	20%	4	4%
Lower Yukon REAA	1,466	348	24%	85	6%
State-identified					
REAA Lower Kuskokwim	3,836	840	22%	141	4%
Yupit REAA	210	67	32%	9	4%
Pribilof Islands REAA	71	33	46%	9	13%
Total	8,386	1,973	24%	423	5%

Data Source(s): 2023 ACS 5-year Estimates, Table S1101

Table 21. Overcrowding by REAA

MID (Most Impacted and Distressed) Areas	Total Number of Households	Percent Overcrowded (1.01 or more occupants per room)	Percent Severely Overcrowded (1.51 or more occupants per room)
HUD-identified			
Bering Strait REAA	2,699	29%	15%
Kashunamiut REAA	104	39%	21%
Lower Yukon REAA	1,466	41%	21%
State-identified			
Lower Kuskokwim REAA	3,836	34%	19%
Yupit REAA	210	48%	31%
Pribilof Islands REAA	71	3%	1%
Total	8,386	34%	18%

Data Source(s): 2023 ACS 5-year Estimates, Table S2501

Table 22. Disaster-Impacted Households with Older Adults (65+) by REAA and Damage Level

MID (Most Impacted and Distressed) Areas*	Total Households in IA by REAA	Total Households with Classified Damage	Number of Impacted Households with Elders (Adults 65 Years Old or More)		
			Moderate	Major	Destroyed
HUD-identified					
Bering Strait REAA	357	110	24	3	0
Kashunamiut REAA	114	25	6	0	0
Lower Yukon REAA	316	110	18	1	0
State-identified					
Lower Kuskokwim REAA and Yupit REAA	301	99	20	0	1
Pribilof Islands REAA	No data				
Total	1,088	344	68	4	1

Data Source(s): FEMA Individual Assistance for 2022 Typhoon Merbok AK-DR-4672. Available: <https://data.sba.gov/dataset/office-of-capital-access>. Accessed: July 24, 2025. Note that the communities of Akiachak and Tuluksak are within the Yupit REAA but were recorded under Lower Kuskokwim REAA in the FEMA Individual Assistance assessment for FEMA Disaster No. 4672 (2022 Typhoon Merbok). Each row represents one IA registration/household; counts are by REAA and include only records with a classified damage level (Moderate, Major, or Destroyed). “Elder HHs” are households with ≥1 member age 65+ (from HH_MBR>=65); records with no

data recorded for damage level were excluded (744 in this export); results may include duplicate registrations unless deduplicated by REG_ID.

2.2.6. Income Demographics

Households in the disaster-impacted areas face significant economic disparities compared to the statewide population. The median household income across the HUD- and state-identified Most Impacted and Distressed (MID) areas is \$55,604, which is approximately 38% lower than the statewide median of \$89,336, while per capita income in MID areas is less than half the statewide average.

Table 23. Income Demographics

Income/ Economics Demographic	Statewide	Areas Impacted by Disaster (HUD + State-MIDs)	HUD MIDS
Median Household Income	\$89,336	\$55,604	\$54,006
Per Capita Income	\$44,928	\$18,104	\$18,462

Data Source(s): 2023 ACS 5-year Estimates, Tables B19013 and B19301

2.2.7. Low- and Moderate-Income (LMI) Analysis

Low- and Moderate-Income (LMI) populations represent a substantial share of the communities affected by the disaster. Based on HUD LMI Summary Data, over 22,500 individuals—more than 70% of the total population in MID areas—qualify as LMI.

Table 24. Below Poverty Level

Income/ Economic Demographics	Statewide	Areas Impacted by Disaster (HUD + State-MIDs)	State MIDS	HUD MIDS
Income in the past 12 months below poverty level	72,978	8,406	4,140	4,266
Total for whom poverty is determined	716,703	33,385	17,033	16,352

Data Source(s): 2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject, Table S1701, Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months

Table 25. LMI Analysis Overall

Category	Total LMI Persons	Total Population	Percent LMI
Areawide (State)	301,055	709,940	42.41%

Data Source(s): U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Low and Moderate Income Summary Data (LMISD), FY 2021. Retrieved from <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/cdbq/cdbq-low-moderate-income-data/>

Table 26. LMI Analysis Federally Declared Disaster Areas

County/ Municipality	MID-Total LMI Person (HUD + State-MIDs)	MID-Total Population (HUD + State-MIDs)	% LMI
Bering Strait REAA / Nome Census Tract 1, Block 1	4,840	5,550	74%
Bering Strait REAA / Nome Census Tract 2, Block 1	130	995	13%
Bering Strait REAA / Nome Census Tract 2, Block 2	120	645	19%
Kashunamiut REAA and Lower Yukon REAA / Kusilvak Census Tract 1, Block 4	1,605	1,960	81%
Lower Yukon REAA / Kusilvak Tract 1, Block 1	2,840	3,500	93%
Lower Yukon REAA / Kusilvak Census Tract 1, Block 2	335	360	77%
Lower Yukon REAA / Kusilvak Census Tract 1, Block 3	1,650	2,145	82%
Yupit REAA and Lower Kuskokwin REAA/ Bethel Census Tract 1, Block 3	1,170	1,455	79%
Lower Kuskokwim REAA/Bethel Census Tract 1, Block 1	1,450	1,835	84%
Lower Kuskokwim REAA/Bethel Census Tract 1, Block 2	1,130	1,340	80%
Lower Kuskokwim REAA/Bethel Census Tract 1, Block 4	1,965	2,260	87%
Lower Kuskokwim REAA/Bethel Census Tract 1, Block 5	2,335	2,945	79%
Lower Kuskokwim REAA/Bethel Census Tract 2, Blocks 1-4	2,565	6,095	43%
Pribilof Islands REAA/Aleutians West Census Tract 1, Block 1	405	675	31%
Total	22,540	31,760	66%

Data Source(s): HUD ACS 5-Year 2016–2020 Low- and Moderate-Income (LMI) Summary Data

Income-Qualified Damaged Households

Using FEMA IA records with reported income, at least 313 damaged homes fall below 80 percent AMI across the MID regions with available data. Counts under the regional 80 percent AMI limits include 294 homes with moderate damage, 13 homes with major damage, and 6 homes destroyed. These households will require affordable solutions, while a smaller share will pursue market-rate recovery.

Table 27. Damaged households with income below 80 percent AMI, by REAA and damage level (FEMA IA)

MID (Most Impacted and Distressed) Areas*	CDBG-DR Funded Rental Housing - Tenant Income Limits (< 80% AMI)*	Number of Homes Impacted When Gross Income is Less than 80% AMI		
		Moderate	Major	Destroyed
HUD-identified				
Bering Strait REAA	< \$75,200	77	9	4
Kashunamiut REAA	< \$75,200	24	0	0
Lower Yukon REAA	< \$75,200	101	2	1
State-identified				
Lower Kuskokwim REAA and Yupiit REAA	< \$83,850	92	2	1
Pribilof Islands REAA	< \$89,900	No data		
Total		294	13	6

Data Source(s): HUD ACS 5-Year 2016–2020 Low- and Moderate-Income (LMI) Summary Data; FEMA Individual Assistance for 2022 Typhoon Merbok AK-DR-4672. Available: <https://data.sba.gov/dataset/office-of-capital-access>. Accessed: July 24, 2025. Note that the communities of Akiachak and Tuluksak are within the Yupiit REAA but were recorded under Lower Kuskokwim REAA in the FEMA Individual Assistance assessment for FEMA Disaster No. 4672 (2022 Typhoon Merbok). FEMA IA entries with no data entered for Damage Level or Income were excluded. The export contains 744 records with no data entered for Damage Level, which may include pending or minor classifications and ONA-only cases.

2.2.8. Manufactured Housing Units Impacted by Disaster

Manufactured housing units make up a small share of the housing stock in the disaster-impacted REAAs, ranging from under 1% to just over 3% of total units. The remaining unmet need shown in the table below is based on an analysis of FEMA IA data, which included mobile home units in the Bering Strait, Kashunamiut and Lower Yukon REAAs. Remaining unmet need is recorded as \$0.00 for the Kashunamiut and Lower Yukon REAAs because awarded FEMA Individual Assistance (IA) for personal property, repair and/or replacement of homes met or exceeded the FEMA Verified Loss. FEMA IA records indicate that all properties were referred to the SBA Home Disaster Recovery Loan Program.

Table 28. Manufactured Housing Units Impacted by Disaster

County/Municipality	Number of Units	Percent Of Total Units in County/Municipality	Remaining Unmet Need
Bering Strait REAA	60	1.79%	\$14,433.70
Kashunamiut REAA	3	1.84%	\$0.00
Lower Yukon REAA	10	0.60%	\$0.00
Lower Kuskokwim REAA	159	3.29%	\$0.00
Yupiit REAA	9	3.54%	\$0.00
Pribilof Islands REAA	1	0.79%	\$0.00

County/Municipality	Number of Units	Percent Of Total Units in County/Municipality	Remaining Unmet Need
Total	242	2.33%	\$14,433.70

Data Source(s): 2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject, Table DP04; FEMA IA Data for DR-4672-AK

Note: Yupit REAA was included in the original description of the Lower Kuskokwim REAA

2.2.9. Limited English Proficiency Breakdown of Disaster-related Areas

Across the disaster-impacted REAAs, an estimated 2,064 individuals—or 5.5% of the population—speak English less than “very well,” according to 2023 ACS data. The highest rates of limited English proficiency are found in the Pribilof Islands REAA (17.2%) and Lower Kuskokwim and Yupit REAAs (both at 4.6%), indicating a need for language-accessible recovery communications and services.

Table 29. Limited English Proficiency Breakdown of Disaster-related Areas

County/ Municipality	Estimate Speak English Less Than “Very Well”	Percent Speak English Less Than “Very Well”
Bering Strait REAA	175	1.9%
Kashunamiut REAA	263	3.7%
Lower Yukon REAA	263	3.7%
Lower Kuskokwim REAA	755	4.6%
Yupit REAA	755	4.6%
Pribilof Islands REAA	871	17.2%
Total	2,064	5.5%

Data Source(s): 2023 ACS 5-year Estimates, Table DP02

2.2.10. Point-in-Time Count – Type of Shelter

The table below shows the most recent available one-night counts of unhoused individuals in Alaska, the FEMA-Declared areas for DR-AK-4672, the HUD-identified MID areas for DR-AK-4672, and the combined HUD- and State-identified MID areas for DR-AK-4672. Shelters for unhoused people exist primarily in Alaska hub communities, such as Anchorage. Nome and Bethel are regional hub communities with homelessness support facilities in the FEMA Declared and MID areas impacted by Typhoon Merbok. In the small villages surrounding these hub communities, the true homeless population is not well represented by point-in-time counts because most people stay with relatives in overcrowded homes. Section 2.2.1. Pre-disaster Unmet Need is estimated using a methodology that accounts for overcrowding in these communities. The table below shows Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Data, which does not report disaggregated data for smaller communities in the MID areas.

Table 30. Point-in-Time Count – Type of Shelter (January 31, 2023)

Geography	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Unsheltered Homeless	Total Known Homeless
Areawide (State)	1,343	295	135	6,667
FEMA Declared [1]	124	0	0	125
HUD MID [2]	69	0	0	69
HUD and State MID [3]	124	0	0	125

Data Source(s): Alaska Balance of State Continuum of Care (CoC) Data - Institute for Community Alliances, Alaska Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Data and Reports. Available: <https://icalliances.org/alaska-communities-dashboard>. Accessed July 31, 2025.

[1] FEMA Declared areas for DR-AK-4672 include the Bering Strait REAA, Kashunamiut REAA, Lower Kuskokwim RAA, and Lower Yukon REAA. Geographies within this query for which HMIS data was available include: Nome and Bethel. Data for small communities is available statewide but not by region.

[2] HUD MID areas for DR-AK-4672 include Bering Strait REAA, Kashunamiut REAA, and Lower Yukon REAA. Geographies within this query for which HMIS data was available include: Nome. Data for small communities is available statewide but not by region.

[3] HUD and State MID areas for DR-AK-4672 include Bering Strait REAA, Kashunamiut REAA, Lower Kuskokwim RAA, Lower Yukon REAA, Yupiit REAA, and Pribilof Islands REAA. Geographies within this query for which HMIS data was available include: Nome and Bethel. Data for small communities is available statewide but not by region.

2.2.11. Point-in-Time Count – Impacted by Disaster

Information requests were sent to providers of shelter and support services for people experiencing homelessness in the impacted areas. The Bethel Homeless Coalition, Nome Community Center and Bay Haven (in Hooper Bay) have confirmed that no homeless persons or support facilities were impacted by Typhoon Merbok in their respective areas. The Emmonak Women's Shelter is located along the Yukon River. Although information requests to providers did not result in reports of direct impact to the building, a substantial increase in erosion of the land adjacent to the building was reported.

2.2.12. Assisted Housing Impacted by the Disaster

Preliminary data indicate that 46 Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) units are located within the affected areas, with 17 in Bering Strait REAA and 29 in Lower Yukon REAA. Three LIHTC units were represented in FEMA IA data for DR-4672-AK, with a remaining unmet need of \$11,395 in the Bering Strait REAA. Remaining unmet need is recorded as \$0 for the Lower Yukon REAA because awarded FEMA Individual Assistance (IA) for personal property, repair and/or replacement of homes met or exceeded the FEMA Verified Loss. FEMA IA records indicate that all properties were referred to the SBA Home Disaster Recovery Loan Program.

No Housing Choice Voucher or Public Housing Dwelling Units have been reported as impacted to date, and further investigation is needed to assess unmet needs across all assisted housing types. Data requests have been made. More information about damages and unmet recovery needs will continue to be identified through planned outreach to MID communities and service providers in 2025-2026.

Table 31. Assisted Housing Impacted by the Disaster

County/ Municipality	Total Housing Choice Vouchers	Total Impacted Housing Choice Voucher Units	Total LIHTC Units	Total Impacted LIHTC Units	Total Public Housing Dwelling Units	Total Impacted Public Housing Dwelling Units	Remaining Unmet Need
Bering Strait REAA	0	0	17	2	1	0	\$0
Kashunamiut REAA	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0
Lower Yukon REAA	0	0	29	1	0	0	\$0
Lower Kuskokwim REAA	0	0	0	0	1	0	\$0
Yupit REAA	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0
Pribilof Islands REAA	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0
Total	0	0	46	3	2	0	\$0

Data Source(s): Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC), “Alaska Housing Choice Voucher Program” webpage. Available: <https://www.ahfc.us/pros/landlords/housing-choice-voucher-program/housing-choice-voucher-locations>. Accessed July 28, 2025. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) LIHTC data for Alaska. Available: <https://www.huduser.gov/lihtc/>. Accessed July 28, 2025. Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC) direct request for information about impacts from Typhoon Merbok and Remaining Unmet Recovery Need. FEMA Individual Assistance (IA) data.

2.2.13 Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) is non-time-limited affordable housing paired with voluntary supportive services for people experiencing homelessness with a disability (HUD, 24 CFR 578.3). PSH is a critical recovery tool where disaster damage, displacement, and overcrowding heighten risks for elders and people with disabilities. However, neither FEMA IA nor the FEMA IRC tax export include information that identify PSH inventory, unit status, or client displacement. Quantified PSH impacts remain a data gap.

The Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC) is conducting a Senior Needs Assessment for all Alaska communities expected in the Spring 2026 and a Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault (DVSA) shelter and housing assessment expected at the end of 2026. Until those datasets are available, this Action Plan treats PSH/DVSA impacts as unmet information needs.

2.3. Fair Housing, Civil Rights Data, and Advancing Equity

The 2022 Typhoon Merbok impacted many of Alaska’s most vulnerable and historically underserved communities, including rural and remote school districts identified as Most Impacted and Distressed (MIDs) by HUD and the State. These communities are predominantly Alaska Native, face disproportionately high poverty rates, and often have limited access to housing, infrastructure, and services. CDBG-DR investments in these areas must actively advance equitable recovery by addressing long-standing disparities, supporting culturally appropriate housing and infrastructure, and ensuring all protected classes—including individuals with limited English proficiency and persons with disabilities—are considered in the planning and implementation of recovery programs.

Race and Ethnicity

Race and ethnicity data for the HUD-identified and State-identified Most Impacted and Distressed (MID) areas were sourced from the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2023 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates, Table DP05 (See table: *Grantee Demographics and Disaster-Impacted Populations (2023)*). All six REAAs included in the disaster recovery plan serve populations that are majority Alaska Native, with especially high concentrations in the Kusilvak and Bethel Census Areas. These regions face intersecting challenges related to rural isolation, subsistence-based economies, and systemic underinvestment in housing and infrastructure. Demographic context is critical to ensure CDBG-DR funding decisions support equitable recovery and address the needs of Alaska Native communities.

HUD-identified MID (Most Impacted and Distressed) Areas

Bering Strait REAA

Located in the Nome Census Area, this REAA serves a population that is approximately 76% Alaska Native or American Indian, primarily Inupiat.

Kashunamiut REAA

The Kashunamiut REAA, located in the Kusilvak Census Area, serves a population that is over 95% Alaska Native, predominantly Yup’ik.

Lower Yukon REAA

Also located in the Kusilvak Census Area, the Lower Yukon REAA shares a similar demographic profile with Kashunamiut, with over 90% of the population identifying as Alaska Native. State-identified MID (Most Impacted and Distressed) Areas.

Lower Kuskokwim REAA

Serving the Bethel Census Area, this REAA includes communities that are over 80% Alaska Native.

Yupiit REAA

Also within the Bethel Census Area, Yupiit REAA communities are over 90% Alaska Native, largely of the Yup’ik cultural group. Note: Yupiit REAA was included in the original description of the Lower Kuskokwim REAA.

Pribilof Islands REAA

The Pribilof Islands REAA, in the Aleutians West Census Area, has a more racially diverse population, including Alaska Native (primarily Unangan), White, and Asian or Pacific Islander residents.

Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

Data on English language proficiency were obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2023 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates, Tables DP02 (Selected Social Characteristics) and S1602 (Limited-English-Speaking Households). Across all disaster-impacted REAAs, LEP populations are present but vary widely in scale. Bethel and Kusilvak Census Areas report the largest numbers of households speaking Indigenous languages other than English, with smaller but notable LEP populations in Nome and Aleutians West.

HUD-identified MID (Most Impacted and Distressed) Areas

Bering Strait REAA

In the Nome Census Area, an estimated 1.9% of the population speaks English less than “very well,” with over 1,000 households speaking Indigenous languages at home. The region’s LEP population primarily reflects Alaska Native language speakers.

Kashunamiut REAA and Lower Yukon REAA

In the Kusilvak Census Area, 3.7% of residents speak English less than “very well,” and over 900 households report using Indigenous languages. LEP challenges in this area are tied to the widespread use of Central Yup’ik.

State-identified MID (Most Impacted and Distressed) Areas

Lower Kuskokwim REAA and Yupiit REAA

In the Bethel Census Area, 4.6% of the population speaks English less than “very well.” Over 3,000 households report speaking Indigenous languages, underscoring the need for translation and culturally responsive services in recovery programs. Note: Yupiit REAA was included in the original description of the Lower Kuskokwim REAA.

Pribilof Islands REAA

In the Aleutians West Census Area, 17.2% of the population speaks English less than “very well,” with significant numbers of Asian and Pacific Islander language speakers as well as Alaska Native residents.

Persons with Disabilities

Across the disaster-impacted REAAs, the proportion of residents with disabilities ranges from 8.2% to 28.3%, with the highest rate observed in the Pribilof Islands REAA. These figures underscore the importance of ensuring that CDBG-DR programs are accessible and inclusive of people with disabilities, particularly in areas with elevated prevalence.

Table 32. Persons with Disabilities

MID (Most Impacted and Distressed) Areas	Persons With Disabilities (#)	Persons With Disabilities (%)
HUD-identified		
Bering Strait REAA	1084	11.3%
Kashunamiut REAA	63	13.6%
Lower Yukon REAA	933	14.0%
State-identified		
Lower Kuskokwim REAA	1806	11.5%
Yupit REAA	100	8.2%
Pribilof Islands REAA	119	28.3%

Data Source(s): 2023 ACS 5-year Estimates, Table S1810. Note: Yupit REAA was included in the original description of the Lower Kuskokwim REAA.

Other Protected Classes

Other protected classes (including locally defined protected classes) have not been identified in the impacted areas at the time of reporting but may be identified through planned outreach to MID communities in 2025-2026.

Concentrated Areas of Ethnicity and Poverty

Racially and ethnically concentrated areas and areas of concentrated poverty are prevalent across several REAAs, particularly those with majority Alaska Native populations and high poverty rates. For example, in the Kusilvak and Bethel Census Areas, more than 85% of the population identifies as Alaska Native or American Indian, and poverty rates exceed state and national averages. These conditions reflect long-term patterns of underinvestment and structural inequality. (Source(s): 2023 ACS 5-year Estimates, Tables DP05 (Race/Ethnicity) and S1701 (Poverty Status).)

HUD's 2024 AFFH R/ECAP (Racially and Ethnically Concentrated Areas of Poverty) data indicate that there are no HUD-designated R/ECAPs within the MID REAAs referenced in this plan. (Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). *Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) Data—Version AFFHT0007 (December 2024), tract-level public-use files (field RCAP_20)*. Available: <https://archives.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/affht.html>. Accessed: September 21, 2025.)

Historically Distressed and Underserved Communities

All REAAs affected by the 2022 Typhoon Merbok include communities that meet federal definitions of historically distressed and underserved areas. These include remote Alaska Native villages facing persistent economic hardship, limited access to infrastructure and services, and exposure to climate change-related threats. Many lack year-round road access and have experienced decades of housing shortages, water and sewer challenges, and disinvestment in public facilities. (Source(s): HUD MID designations, 2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates, and FEMA disaster records for Typhoon Merbok)

Reduction of Barriers to Accessing Disaster Recovery Assistance

To reduce barriers and advance equity, the grantee will use data on language proficiency, disability status, poverty, culture, and other factors to tailor outreach and program delivery. Strategies will

include offering translation services, ADA-accessible application sites, and culturally appropriate outreach in Alaska Native languages where needed, in accordance with DCRA's Language Access Plan (LAP) which is posted online at <https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/dcra/GrantsSection/CDBG-DR-Merbok.aspx>. The 2022 Typhoon Merbok recovery process revealed a notable lack of applicants for key recovery assistance programs, particularly the FEMA Individual Assistance and SBA disaster loan programs, underscoring systemic access and capacity challenges. Some local governments and organizations lack staff with the skills, knowledge, and dedicated job responsibilities to help individuals apply for and successfully receive assistance. These capacity gaps also limit local governments' ability to pursue, secure, and administer recovery funds. Grant writing and administration were identified as critical support needs in *The Unmet Needs of Environmentally Threatened Alaska Native Villages* (ANTHC, 2024). These capacity gaps also limit local governments' ability to pursue, secure, and administer recovery funds. Community-based organizations will be engaged to reach households with limited internet access or familiarity with government programs. The grantee will prioritize coordination with Tribal governments, regional housing authorities, and local service providers to ensure equitable access and address unmet needs, particularly in remote and severely impacted areas. See section 3.1. Citizen Participation for additional details about the engagement plan.

2.4. Infrastructure Unmet Need

2.4.1. Pre-disaster Unmet Need

Western Alaska’s coastal communities face severe and complex public infrastructure needs – spanning critical sectors of transportation, water and sanitation, energy, and food security. Most communities in the disaster impacted area are not connected to a road system and can only be accessed by air, by water, or, during the winter months, by snowmachine. Many of these communities rely on barges or air cargo to deliver necessary supplies. Village and rural roadways often consist of unpaved roads, walkways, trails, and boardwalks which serve as important routes to local hub towns, medical facilities, schools, and routes to subsistence hunting and fishing locations. In western Alaska, these roadways are often built on permafrost which experiences annual thawing and melting cycles. Conventional roadways can be unsustainable and cost prohibitive to build and maintain due to rapid deterioration (AK Legislature 2010). Coastal erosion – magnified by severe storms such as Typhoon Merbok – has undermined bulk fuel storage, seawalls, schools, and other essential buildings, often the only community shelters available. Pre-disaster assessments show widespread lack of plumbing infrastructure across communities like Diomedede, Stebbins, Wales, Shishmaref, and Teller.

Access and transportation infrastructure unmet needs: Most communities are isolated from any permanent road network and can only be accessed by air, barge (in summer), or snowmachine during winter months. Local routes—unpaved roads, trails, and boardwalks atop saturated soils and/or permafrost—serve as lifelines to hub towns, schools, medical facilities, and subsistence hunting, fishing, and gathering areas. These infrastructures deteriorate rapidly due to thaw cycles, erosion, and flooding, making conventional construction both unsustainable and prohibitively expensive. This challenge has been recognized since at least 2010 by the Alaska Legislature.

The Northwest Alaska Transportation Plan, updated in Spring 2022 just before Typhoon Merbok, identifies regional transportation system threats and needs. It includes the Seward Peninsula, where many MID communities are located. Nome is considered the major transportation and commercial hub community for smaller communities in the Bering Straits REAA. The Nome Coordinated Transportation Plan, published in 2019, identifies needs for more efficient, affordable, accessible public wheelchair accessible transportation. See a list of unmet pre-disaster transportation needs from the Northwest Alaska Transportation Plan included below:

Aviation unmet needs:

- Adequate weather reporting, satellite, and cell coverage
- Airport repairs and upgrades, especially due to structural concerns from thawing permafrost and freight-specific concerns
- Lack of passenger shelters and restrooms

Road system unmet needs:

- Road repair and resiliency from thawing permafrost, erosion, and flooding
- Reduction in maintenance budgets due to DOT&PF budget reductions
- Purchase or replacement of old road maintenance equipment

- Dust control on unpaved roads, as dust reduced visibility, impacts subsistence food resources, and causes negative health/air quality impacts
- Identifying quality material sources for gravel
- Increase need for evacuation roads to reduce vulnerability to extreme weather events
- Connectivity of road connections to improve access
- Vehicle maintenance buildings are needed to provide space to maintain and store local maintenance equipment

Marine/Riverine unmet needs:

- Upgrade and resiliency measures for barge landing areas and associated access roads which have eroded or accreted
- Additional infrastructure needed to support increase in vessel activity in the Arctic

Winter trails and roads unmet needs:

- New or repaired bridges over large waterways to extend the winter trail season and reduce the risk of travelers falling through ice, as residents cannot rely on cold weather to freeze waterways
- Widespread, systematic trail marking
- Emergency trail shelter construction and maintenance

Many of these outstanding challenges and unmet needs are reported across MID communities and reflected in Alaska DOT&PF's Long-Range Transportation Plan, published in May 2021.

Access to clean water and sanitation unmet needs: A March 2022 Bering Strait Community Needs Assessment indicates that prior to 2022, one-quarter of occupied housing in the Nome Census Area lacked complete plumbing. In Diomede, 100% of housing lacked plumbing; in Stebbins, 98%; and in Wales, 96%. Additionally, Diomede, Shishmaref, Stebbins, Teller, and Wales had no piped water systems. Water and sewer cost burdens were high across the region, except in Shaktoolik (medium) and Savoonga (low). Existing infrastructure is vulnerable to erosion, flooding, thawing permafrost, and sediment damage. Sewage lagoons risk washout; tank farms are eroding and vulnerable to flooding; above-ground piping is suffering structural failure. For example, in Kotlik and St. Michael, damage led to multi-year loss of water and flush toilets. According to ANTHC's Unmet Needs Assessment of Environmentally Threatened Communities (2024), "for the Alaska Native villages with water and sewer infrastructure, damage to water and sanitation infrastructure is a regular occurrence due to erosion, thawing permafrost, and flooding. Sewage lagoons are in danger of being washed away by flooding during fall storms, tank farms are encroached upon by erosion, and the structural integrity of above-ground water distribution systems is impacted by failing ground. These damages adversely impact human health by increasing the risk of waterborne diseases and decreasing the availability and quality of drinking water."

Energy infrastructure unmet needs: Villages rely on diesel-powered generators with bulk storage tanks. Many of these tanks are aging and sited in areas with melting permafrost, or erosion- or flood-threatened zones. Typhoon Merbok worsened their vulnerability by damaging protective berms and exposing infrastructure to coastal forces. Communities experience electrical grid breakdowns and

failures, in part due to maintenance needs and lack of qualified personnel to operate. Primary and backup generators are an identified unmet need in many communities.

General infrastructure unmet needs: In 2024, ANTHC published the Unmet Needs Assessment of Environmentally Threatened Communities. This report identified significant and ongoing unmet infrastructure needs among 144 environmentally threatened Alaska Native Villages, many of which were impacted by Typhoon Merbok. The report focuses on unmet needs due to, or exacerbated by, environmental hazards like erosion, flooding, and permafrost degradation – speaking to the intractable connection between infrastructure and mitigation needs in this region. ANTHC estimated that approximately \$4.3 billion in 2020 dollars is needed over 50 years to mitigate infrastructure damage, including an \$80 million annual funding gap over the next 10 years. Investing \$1 in hazard mitigation yields about \$6 in saved response and recovery costs. Despite 60 programs existing for support, only seven have aided environmentally threatened villages; two programs support tribal-led relocation or protection-in-place initiatives.

If divided equally among 144 communities (not accounting differences in size, population, or number of critical facilities), this would total approximately \$29.9 million per community and approximately \$1.6 billion in investment across MID communities over the next 50 years (ANTHC Unmet Needs Assessment, 2024).

2.4.2. Disaster Damage and Impacts

This analysis estimates the disaster infrastructure unmet need as approximately \$63 million, reflecting the local cost share required under the FEMA Public Assistance (PA) Program to address critical infrastructure deficiencies and incorporate resiliency measures. The calculation is based on a 25% local cost share of the total estimated infrastructure need of approximately \$115 million, amounting to nearly \$29 million, with an additional 30% of the estimated project cost for resiliency improvements added to enhance the infrastructure’s ability to withstand future disasters. This number may change as additional input is received.

The analysis includes essential infrastructure sectors such as transportation, water and wastewater systems, energy grids, and public facilities and is based off FEMA Public Assistance (PA) data collected through June 2025. In October 2023, FEMA and DHS&EM published a Recovery Needs Assessment available at <https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/Portals/4/pub/CDBG-Merbok/DR-4672-AK%20Recovery%20Needs%20Assessment%20Second%20Edition%20FINAL%20DRAFT.pdf>. This assessment summarized the recovery needs identified in: Chefornak, Chevak, Gambell, Golovin, Hooper Bay, Kipnuk, Koyuk, Napakiak, Newtok, Nightmute, Nome, Nunam Iqua, Scammon Bay, Shaktoolik, Shishmaref, Saint Michael, Stebbins, Toksook Bay, and Tuntutuliak. These recovery needs are summarized in this report. Remaining Tribal and local governments will be surveyed to identify additional unmet needs and associated costs of needed disaster-related infrastructure improvements as part of planned outreach in 2025-2026 (see 3.1 Citizen Participation).

Figure 14. Unmet Needs in Impacted Communities

Impacted Communities IRC Visited	Unmet Needs Categories											
	1. Erosion	2. Emergency Management	3. Community Planning/Building	4. Wastewater Infrastructure	5. Housing/Recovery	6. Solid Waste Disposal	7. Subsistence Impacts	8. Cemeteries, Churches, and Antifacts	9. Drinking Water Systems	10. Transportation Infrastructure	11. Energy Infrastructure Impacts	
Chevak	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	
Gambell	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	
Golovin	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	
Hooper Bay	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	
Kipnuk	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	
Koyuk	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	
Nightmute	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	
Scammon Bay	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	
Saint Michael	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	
Stebbins	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	
Toksook Bay	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	
Tuntutuliak	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	
	Green	Gap Identified/ Addressed - A project has been executed to address this need.										
	Yellow	Gap Identified/Partially Addressed - A plan may be in place, but has not been implemented.										
	Red	Gap Identified/Not Yet Addressed										
	Grey	No Gaps Identified										

Source: FEMA Recovery Strategy DR-4672-AK, October 2023.

Regional Infrastructure Loss and Damages

The 2022 Typhoon Merbok caused significant damage to public infrastructure across western Alaska. An Interagency Recovery Coordination Initial Assessment Report was published by FEMA on March 13, 2023. As of that date, the FEMA Public Assistance Damage Inventory included 120 entries, documenting damages to roads, sea walls, municipal buildings, sewage systems, cemeteries, and more. Local agencies and communities submitted preliminary damage assessments (PDAs) with estimated costs totaling over \$126 million to FEMA’s PA program (see Table 28). Since then, the total amount obligated by FEMA for infrastructure related damages is approximately \$97 million across all damage categories in the FEMA PA program, with the Bering Strait School REAA applying for the greatest amount of funds. For permanent works categories, FEMA’s funding obligation totals approximately \$86 million (see Table 27). It is important to note that because the damage cost estimates are only estimates, these amounts may change as the projects get underway. Regional infrastructure damage included flood and erosion measures such as seawalls and berms designed to mitigate the impacts of storms like Typhoon Merbok. In Shaktoolik, a newly constructed berm was destroyed. This community is pursuing efforts to relocate (ANTHC 2024).

Roads and Bridges

Roads and bridges suffered the costliest damage compared with other permanent work categories. Erosion and debris caused by flood waters damaged roads, bridges, and culverts throughout the region. Damage to these critical infrastructure blocked evacuation routes, hampered rescue and relief efforts, and left communities without access to shelter, medical care or other necessities of life. Local agencies

and communities assessed estimated preliminary damage costs of almost \$52 million in this category alone.

According to FEMA's 2023 Recovery Needs Assessment, transportation infrastructure sustained severe damages across the region. In Chevak, the barge landing was damaged with less than 50% of the structure remaining. The associated access ramp was completely eroded away by Typhoon Merbok storm surge waves. In Golovin, Typhoon Merbok damaged roads that had recently been repaired. Kipnuk sustained damage to boardwalks, roads, bridges, and the barge landing from storm surge and related rains. Severe erosion impacted the barge landing and access road in Scammon Bay. Transportation infrastructure impacts for 19 communities are documented in the 2023 Recovery Needs Assessment, however the remaining communities have yet to be comprehensively surveyed.

Water Control Facilities

Water control facilities include systems and structures that manage water flow and flood protection, including dams, levees, floodwalls, basins, pump stations, and water diversion structures such as drainage channels. According to FEMA PA data, this category of infrastructure sustained nearly \$20 million in damages. Protective sea walls and berms were compromised or completely destroyed in many communities, leaving critical infrastructure such as docks, runways, wastewater treatment facilities, and power plants vulnerable to flooding.

Buildings and Equipment

According to FEMA PA data, Typhoon Merbok caused approximately \$2.7 million in preliminary estimated damage to public buildings and equipment, predominantly in the Bering Straits School REAA.

Prior to Typhoon Merbok, community systems in western Alaska were already stressed due to flooding, erosion, permafrost degradation, and other factors. The storm caused significant damages to municipal buildings, schools, communication equipment, and other public infrastructure. A comprehensive review of housing unmet needs, including the need for assessing proposed elevation and relocation, is included in Section 2.2.

Utilities

After roads and bridges, the costliest damage from Typhoon Merbok affected utility infrastructure. Damage to infrastructure in this category was estimated at a cost of nearly \$27 million. Coastal communities in remote rural western Alaska rely on diesel-powered microgrids and renewable energy sources such as wind turbines. Energy infrastructure was damaged during the storm, requiring upgrades to become more resilient to future risks. Additionally, several communities need small (5kw) generators, and some need medium size trailer-mounted generators (20kw) to provide primary and backup power. This is a critical unmet need, because most village homes are heated with Toyo or Monitor oil stoves, and these stoves require electricity to ignite the burner and operate the fan. A power outage also means no home heat and associated freezing of the plumbing (FEMA Recovery Needs Assessment, 2023). In many communities, power outages caused subsistence food stores to be lost. In Koyuk, some homes were without power for up to two months, prompting community members to identify a backup generator as an unmet need. Scammon Bay's powerplant sustained flooding due to Typhoon Merbok (FEMA Action Recovery Plan, 2023).

Communities in Western Alaska generally rely on lagoons and leach fields as wastewater management solutions. When these areas flood, contaminants are released into the surrounding environment.

Resiliency measures such as repairing and hardening wastewater infrastructure have been identified to protect community wastewater infrastructure in the future. Many communities sustained breaches of their lagoon berms and wastewater infrastructure due to storm surge and flooding from Typhoon Merbok, including Chevak, Hooper Bay, Koyuk, Nightmute, and Stebbins.

Parks, Recreation, and Other Facilities

Damage to infrastructure in this category was estimated at a cost of nearly \$15 million across affected areas, predominantly in the Bering Strait School REAA. Damages in this category include boardwalks, ramps, playgrounds, docks, and impacts to cemeteries and culturally significant structures. FEMA PA has logged several impacts to cemeteries and other culturally significant structures in the Damage Inventory for this disaster. In Stebbins, buried graves at a historic cemetery were damaged by storm surge waters, including 300 grave sites and 85 grave markers. Fifty graves were damaged in the community of St. Michael Historic Russian Orthodox Cemetery due to a landslide, which caused coffins to drop 50 to 60 feet to the beach. A beach-side subsistence property and an inner harbor in Nome were also damaged (FEMA Initial Assessment Report, 2023).

FEMA Programs

FEMA's PA program assists state, local, territorial, or Tribal (SLTT) governments and certain kinds of private nonprofit (PNP) organizations with funding that helps communities recover from major disasters or emergencies. Pursuant to the FEMA Public Assistance Applicant Handbook (2020), Alaska Native villages and organizations are eligible applicants. Privately owned Alaska Native Corporations are not eligible. By making assistance for hazard mitigation measures available, the PA program also assists in protecting damaged infrastructure from future impacts.

When an incident exceeds the capacity of state, local, tribal, or territorial (SLTT) governments to respond, a joint Preliminary Damage Assessment (PDA) with FEMA may be requested to evaluate the scale and impact. Based on PDA results, a governor or tribal chief executive may request a Presidential major disaster declaration. If a tribe submits a direct request to the President, it may be responsible for the non-federal cost share (typically 25%). Alternatively, if a tribe requests assistance through the State of Alaska, the state may assume the cost share on the tribe's behalf. Once a declaration is approved and Public Assistance (PA) is authorized, FEMA works with SLTT partners to determine applicant, facility, work, and cost eligibility, and then obligates funds for eligible recovery projects.

PA projects follow a cost sharing formula between the federal and local governments. On March 15, 2022, President Biden signed H.R. 2471 into law, which increased the minimum federal cost share from 75 to 90 percent for any emergency or major disaster declaration declared, occurring or having an incident period beginning between January 1, 2020, and December 31, 2021. Typhoon Merbok occurred outside of this date range, meaning that DR-4672 does not qualify for the 90 percent minimum federal cost share. On September 23, 2022, the President issued a major disaster declaration due to damage resulting from the remnants of Typhoon Merbok during the period of September 15 to September 20, 2022. The Bering Strait Regional Educational Attendance Area (REAA), Kashunamiut REAA, Lower Kuskokwim REAA, and Lower Yukon REAA were designated major disaster areas for Individual Assistance (IA) and Public Assistance (PA) Category B - Emergency Protective Measures. The declaration further made Hazard Mitigation Grant Program assistance available statewide. An amendment was subsequently issued to include all categories of PA programs and to add Pribilof Islands REAA for Public Assistance Categories A-G, but not IA.5. Another amendment authorized federal funds for Category B -

Emergency Protective Measures at 100 percent of the total eligible cost for the first 30 days of the incident period due to the severity and magnitude of damage in certain areas. This guidance replaced the previous 70 percent cost share for Category B (FEMA Initial Assessment Report, 2023).

PA projects fall into several categories, organized into either emergency work or permanent work. Emergency work addresses immediate threats and includes:

- Category A – Debris removal
- Category B – Emergency protective measures

Permanent work involves the restoration of damaged facilities and includes:

- Category C – Roads and bridges
- Category D – Water control facilities
- Category E – Buildings and equipment
- Category F – Utilities
- Category G – Parks, recreational and other facilities

Other category:

- Category Z – State Management

For the purposes of the unmet infrastructure needs assessment component of the CDBG-DR Action Plan, HUD only considers needs associated with permanent work.

As of June 10, 2025, projects from eligible PA applicants in the MID areas currently under FEMA review had total permanent work (PA categories C – G) damage costs estimated to be approximately \$115 million, with a federal share obligation of approximately \$86 million. This represents a 75 percent federal cost share. The local share of PA project costs is an eligible use of CDBG-DR funds. If FEMA continues to obligate funds to permanent work projects, the unmet infrastructure need in the form of the local share of PA project costs will continue to increase as well. The estimated project amounts do not include administrative or mitigation costs. Mitigation amount refers to proposed Stafford Act, Section 406 hazard mitigation costs, which apply to permanent work projects and are limited to specific mitigation measures that can be added during repair or restoration.

Table 33. FEMA-DR 4672 Total Project Amount, Federal Share Obligated, and Mitigation Amount by Damage Category Code for Permanent Work Project Categories C – G

PA Category	Estimated Project Amount	Federal Share Obligated	Mitigation Amount
Bering Strait School REAA	\$68,905,505.90	\$51,679,129.50	\$1,188,270.07
C - Roads and Bridges	\$28,806,092.92	\$21,604,569.70	\$24,152.54
D - Water Control Facilities	\$10,888,367.77	\$8,166,275.83	\$142,500.00
E - Buildings and Equipment	\$2,019,543.41	\$1,514,657.58	\$379,420.30
F - Utilities	\$15,955,058.51	\$11,966,293.89	\$405,880.89
G - Parks, Recreational Facilities, and Other Items	\$11,236,443.29	\$8,427,332.50	\$236,316.34
Kashunamiut REAA	\$126,853.25	\$95,139.94	\$0.00
F - Utilities	\$126,853.25	\$95,139.94	\$0.00
Lower Kuskokwim REAA	\$5,239,393.21	\$3,929,544.92	\$18,202.82
C - Roads and Bridges	\$1,591,452.82	\$1,193,589.62	\$18,202.82
D - Water Control Facilities	\$1,924,894.09	\$1,443,670.57	\$0.00
E - Buildings and Equipment	\$414,948.40	\$311,211.30	\$0.00
F - Utilities	\$644,635.85	\$483,476.89	\$0.00
G - Parks, Recreational Facilities, and Other Items	\$663,462.05	\$497,596.54	\$0.00
Lower Yukon REAA	\$33,502,053.80	\$25,126,540.39	\$3,244,001.04
C - Roads and Bridges	\$20,264,741.10	\$15,198,555.84	\$14,447.57
E - Buildings and Equipment	\$263,678.17	\$197,758.63	\$319.85
F - Utilities	\$10,119,949.47	\$7,589,962.12	\$3,219,418.69
G - Parks, Recreational Facilities, and Other Items	\$2,853,685.06	\$2,140,263.80	\$9,814.93
Pribilof Islands REAA	\$7,368,210.00	\$5,526,157.50	\$0.00
C - Roads and Bridges	\$296,186.00	\$222,139.50	\$0.00
D - Water Control Facilities	\$7,047,024.00	\$5,285,268.00	\$0.00
E - Buildings and Equipment	\$25,000.00	\$18,750.00	\$0.00
Total	\$115,142,016.16	\$86,356,512.25	\$4,450,473.93

Data source: FEMA Public Assistance Program: “Public Assistance Funded Projects Details”. Note that there are geographical inconsistencies in some of these estimates. Obvious errors, e.g. Stebbins reassigned from Southwest Region REAA to Bering Strait School REAA were corrected. This estimate was based off information gathered through June 2025.

Table 34. FEMA-DR 4672 Total Project Amount, Federal Share Obligated, and Mitigation Amount by Damage Category Code A – Z, including Statewide Entries in Categories A and Z

Pa Category By Geography	Estimated Project Amount	Federal Share Obligated	Mitigation Amount
Bering Strait School REAA	\$71,725,790.71	\$54,314,197.16	\$1,188,270.07
A - Debris Removal	\$334,296.71	\$250,722.55	\$0.00
B - Emergency Protective Measures	\$472,806.59	\$371,163.60	\$0.00
C - Roads and Bridges	\$28,806,092.92	\$21,604,569.70	\$24,152.54
D - Water Control Facilities	\$10,888,367.77	\$8,166,275.83	\$142,500.00
E - Buildings and Equipment	\$2,019,543.41	\$1,514,657.58	\$379,420.30
F - Utilities	\$15,955,058.51	\$11,966,293.89	\$405,880.89
G - Parks, Recreational Facilities, and Other Items	\$11,236,443.29	\$8,427,332.50	\$236,316.34
Z - Management Costs	\$2,013,181.51	\$2,013,181.51	\$0.00
Kashunamiut REAA	\$130,367.32	\$97,775.49	\$0.00
A - Debris Removal	\$3,514.07	\$2,635.55	\$0.00
F - Utilities	\$126,853.25	\$95,139.94	\$0.00
Lower Kuskokwim REAA	\$5,409,897.93	\$4,098,854.70	\$18,202.82
A - Debris Removal	\$4,779.75	\$3,584.81	\$0.00
C - Roads and Bridges	\$1,591,452.82	\$1,193,589.62	\$18,202.82
D - Water Control Facilities	\$1,924,894.09	\$1,443,670.57	\$0.00
E - Buildings and Equipment	\$414,948.40	\$311,211.30	\$0.00
F - Utilities	\$644,635.85	\$483,476.89	\$0.00
G - Parks, Recreational Facilities, and Other Items	\$663,462.05	\$497,596.54	\$0.00
Z - Management Costs	\$165,724.97	\$165,724.97	\$0.00
Lower Yukon REAA	\$35,271,359.28	\$26,869,149.41	\$3,244,001.04
A - Debris Removal	\$106,785.83	\$80,089.37	\$0.00
C - Roads and Bridges	\$20,264,741.10	\$15,198,555.84	\$14,447.57
E - Buildings and Equipment	\$263,678.17	\$197,758.63	\$319.85
F - Utilities	\$10,119,949.47	\$7,589,962.12	\$3,219,418.69
G - Parks, Recreational Facilities, and Other Items	\$2,853,685.06	\$2,140,263.80	\$9,814.93
Z - Management Costs	\$1,662,519.65	\$1,662,519.65	\$0.00
Pribilof Islands REAA	\$7,403,094.91	\$5,561,042.41	\$0.00
C - Roads and Bridges	\$296,186.00	\$222,139.50	\$0.00
D - Water Control Facilities	\$7,047,024.00	\$5,285,268.00	\$0.00
E - Buildings and Equipment	\$25,000.00	\$18,750.00	\$0.00
Z - Management Costs	\$34,884.91	\$34,884.91	\$0.00
Statewide	\$6,614,074.10	\$6,564,781.96	\$0.00
B - Emergency Protective Measures	\$225,567.57	\$176,275.43	\$0.00
Z - Management Costs	\$6,388,506.53	\$6,388,506.53	\$0.00
Grand Total	\$126,590,252.90	\$97,541,469.78	\$4,450,473.93

Data source: FEMA Public Assistance Program: "Public Assistance Funded Projects Details". Note that there are geographical inconsistencies in some of these estimates. Obvious errors were corrected, e.g. Stebbins reassigned from Southwest Region REAA to Bering Strait School REAA. This estimate was based off PA information gathered through June 2025.

Table 35. Total Cost and Need by Public Assistance Category including Resiliency Cost

PA Category	Estimated Project Amount	25% Local Match	30% Resiliency	Total Unmet Need (Match + Resiliency)
C - Roads and Bridges	\$50,958,472.84	\$12,739,618.18	\$15,287,541.85	\$28,027,160.03
Bering Strait School REAA	\$28,806,092.92	\$7,201,523.22	\$8,641,827.88	\$15,843,351.10
Lower Kuskokwim REAA	\$1,591,452.82	\$397,863.20	\$477,435.85	\$875,299.05
Lower Yukon REAA	\$20,264,741.10	\$5,066,185.26	\$6,079,422.33	\$11,145,607.59
Pribilof Islands REAA	\$296,186.00	\$74,046.50	\$88,855.80	\$162,902.30
D - Water Control Facilities	\$19,860,285.86	\$4,965,071.46	\$5,958,085.76	\$10,923,157.22
Bering Strait School REAA	\$10,888,367.77	\$2,722,091.94	\$3,266,510.33	\$5,988,602.27
Lower Kuskokwim REAA	\$1,924,894.09	\$481,223.52	\$577,468.23	\$1,058,691.75
Pribilof Islands REAA	\$7,047,024.00	\$1,761,756.00	\$2,114,107.20	\$3,875,863.20
E - Buildings and Equipment	\$2,723,169.98	\$680,792.47	\$816,950.99	\$1,497,743.46
Bering Strait School REAA	\$2,019,543.41	\$504,885.83	\$605,863.02	\$1,110,748.85
Lower Kuskokwim REAA	\$414,948.40	\$103,737.10	\$124,484.52	\$228,221.62
Lower Yukon REAA	\$263,678.17	\$65,919.54	\$79,103.45	\$145,022.99
Pribilof Islands REAA	\$25,000.00	\$6,250.00	\$7,500.00	\$13,750.00
F - Utilities	\$26,846,497.08	\$6,711,624.24	\$8,053,949.12	\$14,765,573.36
Bering Strait School REAA	\$15,955,058.51	\$3,988,764.62	\$4,786,517.55	\$8,775,282.17
Kashunamiut REAA	\$126,853.25	\$31,713.31	\$38,055.98	\$69,769.29
Lower Kuskokwim REAA	\$644,635.85	\$161,158.96	\$193,390.76	\$354,549.72
Lower Yukon REAA	\$10,119,949.47	\$2,529,987.35	\$3,035,984.84	\$5,565,972.19
G - Parks, Recreational Facilities, and Other Items	\$14,753,590.40	\$3,688,397.56	\$4,426,077.12	\$8,114,474.68
Bering Strait School REAA	\$11,236,443.29	\$2,809,110.79	\$3,370,932.99	\$6,180,043.78
Lower Kuskokwim REAA	\$663,462.05	\$165,865.51	\$199,038.62	\$364,904.13
Lower Yukon REAA	\$2,853,685.06	\$713,421.26	\$856,105.52	\$1,569,526.78
Total	\$115,142,016.16	\$28,785,503.91	\$34,542,604.85	\$63,328,108.76

Data source: FEMA Public Assistance Program: "Public Assistance Funded Projects Details".

Note that there are geographical inconsistencies in some of these estimates. Obvious errors in source data were corrected, e.g. Stebbins reassigned from Southwest Region REAA to Bering Strait School REAA. This estimate was based off PA information gathered through June 2025. HUD does not have a fixed, mandated formula for calculating resiliency costs in CDBG-DR infrastructure projects. For planning purposes, this analysis applies a resiliency formula of 30 percent of the base infrastructure cost. This is consistent with HUD’s federal registrar notice (78 FR 69104, Nov. 18, 2013) following Hurricane Sandy, which established a calculation of “resiliency” to be 30 percent of the total basic cost to rebuild back the most distressed infrastructure to pre-storm conditions. This “resiliency” allocation is calculated based on the relative share of needs HUD estimated are required to rebuild to a higher standard consistent with CDBG program requirements. Resilience improvements must be reasonable and necessary, making infrastructure less vulnerable to future disasters. Examples may include relocating facilities outside of a floodplain or incorporating green infrastructure to reduce damage to future storm and flooding events. The infrastructure repair unmet need is combined with the resiliency need to calculate the total unmet needs estimated to achieve long-term recovery.

On September 23, 2022, the President issued a major disaster declaration due to damage resulting from the remnants of Typhoon Merbok during the period of September 15 to September 20, 2022 which further made Hazard Mitigation Grant Program assistance available statewide (FEMA Initial Assessment Report, 2023).

Section 404 of the Stafford Act authorizes that Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) funds are available statewide in the event of a presidentially declared disaster. The Alaska Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management is responsible for coordinating with FEMA to administer this grant. HMGP provides cost-share grants to eligible entities for cost-effective mitigation projects. Under the FEMA HMGP, the State of Alaska is responsible for the local match when jurisdictions apply through the State.

It should be noted that this is likely a significant underestimate of total unmet infrastructure need in the region. Information gathered through the community engagement process is subject to change this estimate.

Hazard Mitigation Unmet Need

Hazard Mitigation Grant Program: HMGP grant funds were made available following DR-4672 and approximately \$15 million was allocated to projects across the State. However, no projects were submitted for DR-4672 from any of the communities affected by the disaster. St. Michael considered applying, but their project was ultimately submitted the following year under DR-4730 for Lower Yukon Flooding. Kawerak submitted notice of intents on behalf of Gamble and Elim, but HMGP did not have funding for 8 million- and 12-million-dollar projects. These projects, totaling 20 million dollars, are added to the mitigation unmet need calculation. Kawerak also did not own what was wanting to be mitigated. HMGP never received anything from the communities directly.

It is noted that the State of Alaska historically receives few applications from Alaska's western coastal communities. A list of examples is included below. This list is not exhaustive.

- DR-4413: Newtok home buyout project submitted in January 2020 and awarded in February 2024.
- DR-4413: Kongiganak boardwalk retrofit project submitted in January 2020 and Phase 1 awarded in October 2024.
- DR-4351: Kipnuk home relocation project submitted in March 2019 and withdrawn.
- DR-4257: Project applications by three jurisdictions were not completed in time to meet the DR-4257 (2016) deadline and were moved to DR-4585 (2020). One jurisdiction has since withdrawn, and the others are pending FEMA review as of August 2025.

These projects illustrate that it can take years between submitting a project application and being awarded grant funds. Understanding and addressing the unique barriers that communities in western Alaska face in securing HMGP funding will help communities recover and build long-lasting resilience to future disasters.

Table 36. Mitigation Unmet Need

Source	Unmet Need
Information from the SOA regarding projects that were not submitted to HMGP but represent an unmet infrastructure need	\$20,000,000
TOTAL	\$20,000,000

Source: State of Alaska DHS&EM

Hazard Mitigation Needs per Community or Known Project

The following table lists BIA TCR grant funds awarded across Merbok-affected communities in fiscal years 2022 and 2023. This information does not capture possible remaining unmet need associated with each project but demonstrates impacts from the disaster and recovery priorities. Unmet needs will be updated in future amendments with information from the community engagement process.

Table 37. Bureau of Indian Affairs Branch of Tribal Climate Resilience 2022 and 2023 Annual Awards Summary

Project by Community	Sum of Funded Amount by BIA TCR
Bering Strait REAA	\$1,648,592.00
Chinik Eskimo Community (Golovin)	\$83,736.00
Category 12: Relocation, Managed Retreat, and Protect-in-Place Planning Coordinator: Relocation, Managed Retreat, or Protect-in-Place (RMP) Coordinator	\$83,736.00
Kawerak, Inc.	\$511,685.00
Category 1: Planning: Adaptation planning: Planning specialist	\$249,147.00
Category 2 - Adaptation Planning: Climate change coordinator for mitigation and adaptation planning and implementation	\$247,698.00
Category 3: Travel Support for Climate Adaptation Planning: Travel support and access for adaptation and resilience trainings	\$14,840.00
Native Village of Diomede	\$232,036.00
Category 1: Planning: Climate adaptation plan	\$232,036.00
Native Village of Saint Michael	\$148,432.00
Category 7: Relocation, Managed Retreat and Protect-In-Place Planning: Permafrost risk assessment	\$148,432.00
Native Village of Shaktoolik	\$143,151.00
Category 12: Relocation, Managed Retreat, and Protect-in-Place Planning Coordinator: Relocation, Managed Retreat, or Protect-in-Place (RMP) Coordinator	\$143,151.00
Native Village of Shishmaref	\$150,000.00
Set-Aside 3: Relocation, Managed Retreat, or Protect-in-Place (RMP) Coordinator: Relocation, Managed Retreat, or Protect-in-Place (RMP) Coordinator	\$150,000.00
Native Village of Unalakleet	\$379,552.00
Category 7: Relocation, Managed Retreat and Protect-In-Place Planning: Managed retreat housing prototype planning	\$290,440.00

Project by Community	Sum of Funded Amount by BIA TCR
Set-Aside 3: Relocation, Managed Retreat, or Protect-in-Place (RMP) Coordinator: Relocation, Managed Retreat, or Protect-in-Place (RMP) Coordinator	\$89,112.00
Lower Kuskokwim REAA	\$15,857,056.00
Native Village of Kipnuk	\$528,741.00
Category 2 - Adaptation Planning: Permafrost risk assessment	\$168,452.00
Category 7: Relocation, Managed Retreat and Protect-In-Place Planning: Long-term erosion and flood assessment	\$245,056.00
Set-Aside 3: Relocation, Managed Retreat, or Protect-in-Place (RMP) Coordinator: Relocation, Managed Retreat, or Protect-in-Place (RMP) Coordinator	\$115,233.00
Native Village of Kongiganak	\$449,223.00
Category 1 - Trainings and Workshops: GIS data collection and mapping training	\$136,413.00
Category 2: Implementation: Erosion mitigation preliminary engineering project	\$200,000.00
Set-Aside 3: Relocation, Managed Retreat, or Protect-in-Place (RMP) Coordinator: Relocation, Managed Retreat, or Protect-in-Place (RMP) Coordinator	\$112,810.00
Native Village of Kwigillingok	\$150,000.00
Category 12: Relocation, Managed Retreat, and Protect-in-Place Planning Coordinator: Relocation, Managed Retreat, or Protect-in-Place (RMP) Coordinator	\$150,000.00
Native Village of Kwinhagak (aka Quinhagak)	\$121,494.00
Set-Aside 3: Relocation, Managed Retreat, or Protect-in-Place (RMP) Coordinator: Relocation, Managed Retreat, or Protect-in-Place (RMP) Coordinator	\$121,494.00
Native Village of Kwinhagak (Quinhagak)	\$4,000,000.00
Category 2: Implementation: Permafrost mitigation: Home assessment, barge landing assessment, multi-purpose facility design, preschool foundation replacement, managed retreat subdivision design	\$4,000,000.00
Native Village of Nunapitchuk	\$2,217,314.00
Category 11: Implementation for Relocation, Managed Retreat, and Protect-in-Place Actions: Managed retreat: Construction of new public safety building	\$2,217,314.00
Native Village of Tuntutuliak	\$547,356.00
Category 2 - Adaptation Planning: Permafrost risk assessment	\$180,982.00
Category 7: Relocation, Managed Retreat and Protect-In-Place Planning: Near-term erosion risk assessment	\$236,374.00
Set-Aside 3: Relocation, Managed Retreat, or Protect-in-Place (RMP) Coordinator: Relocation, Managed Retreat, or Protect-in-Place (RMP) Coordinator	\$130,000.00
Native Village of Tununak	\$122,898.00
Set-Aside 3: Relocation, Managed Retreat, or Protect-in-Place (RMP) Coordinator : Relocation, Managed Retreat, or Protect-in-Place (RMP) Coordinator	\$122,898.00
Newtok Village	\$149,064.00
Category 12: Relocation, Managed Retreat, and Protect-in-Place Planning Coordinator: Relocation, Managed Retreat, or Protect-in-Place (RMP) Coordinator	\$149,064.00
Nunakauyarmiut Tribe (Toksook Bay)	\$126,898.00

Project by Community	Sum of Funded Amount by BIA TCR
Set-Aside 3: Relocation, Managed Retreat, or Protect-in-Place (RMP) Coordinator: Relocation, Managed Retreat, or Protect-in-Place (RMP) Coordinator	\$126,898.00
Village of Chefornak	\$7,444,068.00
Category 11: Implementation for Relocation, Managed Retreat, and Protect-in-Place Actions: Managed retreat: Construction of heavy equipment, gravel pad, and gravel road for a new subdivision	\$2,995,843.00
Category 12: Relocation, Managed Retreat, and Protect-in-Place Planning Coordinator: Relocation, Managed Retreat, or Protect-in-Place (RMP) Coordinator	\$149,708.00
Category 2: Implementation: Home stabilization and construction	\$4,000,000.00
Category 7: Relocation, Managed Retreat and Protect-In-Place Planning: Permafrost risk assessment	\$298,517.00
Lower Yukon REAA	\$198,899.00
Native Village of Kotlik	\$102,861.00
Set-Aside 3: Relocation, Managed Retreat, or Protect-in-Place (RMP) Coordinator: Relocation, Managed Retreat, or Protect-in-Place (RMP) Coordinator	\$102,861.00
Native Village of Nunam Iqua (Sheldon Point)	\$96,038.00
Set-Aside 3: Relocation, Managed Retreat, or Protect-in-Place (RMP) Coordinator Relocation, Managed Retreat, or Protect-in-Place (RMP) Coordinator	\$96,038.00
Pribilof Islands REAA	\$4,029,869.00
Saint Paul Island	\$4,029,869.00
Category 1: Planning: Strengthening Indigenous narratives through data dissemination and high impact storytelling	\$249,215.00
Category 2: Implementation: Erosion stabilization of cemetery	\$3,530,654.00
Category 4: Ocean and Coastal Management: Data analysis for flood and coastal erosion mitigation	\$250,000.00
Yupiit REAA	\$3,181,687.00
Akiak Native Community	\$2,856,775.00
Category 11: Implementation for Relocation, Managed Retreat, and Protect-in-Place Actions: Managed retreat planning and implementation	\$2,706,775.00
Category 12: Relocation, Managed Retreat, and Protect-in-Place Planning Coordinator: Relocation, Managed Retreat, or Protect-in-Place (RMP) Coordinator	\$150,000.00
Native Village of Tuluksak	\$14,856.00
Category 3: Travel Support for Climate Adaptation Planning: Workshops for multi-jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan	\$14,856.00
Tuluksak Native Community	\$310,056.00
Category 12: Relocation, Managed Retreat, and Protect-in-Place Planning Coordinator: Relocation, Managed Retreat, or Protect-in-Place (RMP) Coordinator	\$65,000.00
Category 7: Relocation, Managed Retreat and Protect-In-Place Planning: Long-term erosion and flood assessment	\$245,056.00
Grand Total	\$ 24,916,103.00

The Interagency Recovery Coordination (IRC) Team connects FEMA’s network of regional federal recovery partners and their resources to state, tribal, and local partners to identify and fulfil their unmet needs. An IRC team has been working with select communities impacted by Typhoon Merbok, these are: Chevak, Gambell, Golovin, Hooper Bay, Kipnuk, Koyuk, Kwigillingok, Nightmute, Scammon Bay, Stebbins, St. Michael, Toksook Bay, and Tuntutuliak. A status update on projects to fulfil unmet needs demonstrates that there are several unfunded projects in each community. A preliminary review of this information demonstrates unfunded projects related to Infrastructure (e.g. Transportation Infrastructure, Subsistence Impacts, Water and Sewer Systems, Energy Infrastructure, and Solid Waste Disposal) and Mitigation (e.g. Flood and Erosion Control, Transportation Infrastructure, Recovery Capacity, and Housing Recovery).

The IRC provided information on unmet needs, projects, and project statuses in support of this Unmet Needs Assessment and Action Recovery Plan. This data provides an important, though not entirely comprehensive, snapshot of unmet needs in a subset of impacted communities through August 2025.

For the purposes of better understanding mitigation unmet needs, the following methodology was used to assess data provided by the IRC. It should be noted that this assessment is not included in the Mitigation Unmet Need calculation. This is because of the incompleteness of the data and the difficulty of accounting for duplication of funds. However, record of these projects is included to demonstrate the types of incomplete mitigation projects that a subset of communities have identified in the storm’s aftermath.

Methodology: An IRC dataset was provided for this Action Plan. The dataset with the most project-level detail was selected for this analysis. Mitigation projects were identified from the project lists for each community: Chevak, Gambell, Golovin, Hooper Bay, Kipnuk, Koyuk, Kwigillingok, Nightmute, Scammon Bay, St. Michael, Stebbins, Toksook Bay, and Tuntutuliak. Mitigation activities are those that increase resilience to future disasters and reduce or eliminate the long-term risk of loss of life, injury, damage to and loss of property, and suffering and hardship. Examples of mitigation projects may include:

- Building a new sea wall to mitigate against storm surge and flooding.
- Elevating homes in the floodplain area to mitigate damage from future flood events.
- Erosion protection measures in an airport expansion project.

For a project to constitute mitigation, it must reduce or eliminate the risk of adverse impacts of a hazard. For CDBG-DR eligibility, the project may tie back to the disaster, but it does not have to if it ties to a pre-disaster unmet need. There is a 15% cap for CDBG-DR mitigation funds that do not tie back to the disaster. Pre-disaster unmet mitigation needs are described in the Hazard Unmet Needs Assessment of this Action Recovery Plan. Not all projects identified are eligible for funding under CDBG-DR.

For each project listed, a very preliminary cost estimate was assigned to each project. Large projects were given a cost estimate of \$10,000,000. Medium projects were given a cost estimate of \$1,000,000. Small projects were given a cost estimate of \$100,000. Projects with a cost estimate provided by the IRC were kept.

Using the IRC data, the funding status of each project was identified. In cases where there was not an identified funding source, the remaining unmet need was calculated as the total estimated cost of the

project. In instances where a funding source was identified but the amount was unknown, it was assumed that the full cost of the project was covered and there was no remaining unmet need.

Limitations:

- In some instances, a project may better be categorized as an infrastructure or a housing project. Category assignments were made with limited contextual information for each project. Follow up is needed.
- Project cost estimates are likely underestimates in most cases. This analysis would benefit from accurate cost estimates.
- Project funding statuses were filled in using available IRC data and may not represent the most accurate and up-to-date information. Follow up is needed.
- This list may not represent all mitigation needs in these communities. Follow up is needed.

The projects listed in the table below may represent pre-disaster and post-disaster mitigation unmet needs. Also note that not all projects are eligible for mitigation funding under CDBG-DR.

Table 38. Mitigation Projects Identified by the IRC in 13 Communities

Location	Mitigation Project Subcategory	Project Description	Cost Estimate	Project Status - Funding Source	Remaining Unmet Need
Bering Strait REAA: Gambell	Emergency Management	Construct evacuation route and shelter on higher ground	\$ 20,000,000	EPA CCERTA awarded. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 20,000,000
Bering Strait REAA: Gambell	Recovery Capacity	Purchase heavy equipment and materials for mitigation work.	\$ 20,000,000	Ongoing - EPA CCERTA. Total cost of project remains. Note: This is generally not an eligible use of CDBG-DR funds.	\$ 20,000,000
Bering Strait REAA: Gambell	Flood and Erosion Control	ADOT storm surge protection for the runway	\$ 1,000,000	Unknown funding status. Assume funding by ADOT.	\$ 0
Bering Strait REAA: Gambell	Flood and Erosion Control	Mitigate storm surge and flooding - new seawall	\$ 10,000,000	EPA CCERTA, BRIC DTA awarded. Total cost of the project remains.	\$ 10,000,000
Bering Strait REAA: Golovin	Emergency Management	Design and construction of emergency shelter.	\$ 10,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 10,000,000
Bering Strait REAA: Golovin	Energy Infrastructure	Propose relocating and protecting power plant.	\$ 1,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 1,000,000
Bering Strait REAA: Golovin	Energy Infrastructure	Power plant elevation	\$ 1,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 1,000,000
Bering Strait REAA: Golovin	Housing Recovery	Elevating homes in the floodplain area	\$ 10,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 10,000,000

Location	Mitigation Project Subcategory	Project Description	Cost Estimate	Project Status - Funding Source	Remaining Unmet Need
Bering Strait REAA: Golovin	Flood and Erosion Control	Strengthening shoreline against erosion	\$ 100,00,000	BRIC DTA awarded. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 10,000,000
Bering Strait REAA: Koyuk	Energy Infrastructure	Relocate certain power poles	\$ 1,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 1,000,000
Bering Strait REAA: Koyuk	Housing Recovery	Relocation of 20 homes threatened by erosion and flooding	\$ 10,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 10,000,000
Bering Strait REAA: Koyuk	Transportation Infrastructure	Propose airport expansion with erosion protection measures	\$ 1,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 1,000,000
Bering Strait REAA: Koyuk	Transportation Infrastructure	Relocate marine fuel header	\$ 1,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 1,000,000
Bering Strait REAA: Koyuk	Transportation Infrastructure	Repair/relocate barge access road	\$ 10,00,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 1,000,000
Bering Strait REAA: Koyuk	Recovery Capacity	Propose funding for heavy equipment	\$ 10,000,000	ARPA funding awarded. Amount unknown. Funding gaps remain. Note: This is generally not an eligible use of CDBG-DR funding.	\$ 0
Bering Strait REAA: St. Michael	Housing Recovery	Repair/Relocate homes impacted by erosion	\$ 10,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 10,000,000
Bering Strait REAA: St. Michael	Flood and Erosion Control	Applied for USACE funding for shoreline erosion-related project and was not selected.	\$ 10,000,000	ANTHC is conducting a Permafrost Assessment. Other funding not identified.	\$ 10,000,000
Bering Strait REAA: St. Michael	Flood and Erosion Control	Fortify cemetery from erosion.	\$ 1,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 1,000,000
Lower Kuskokwim REAA: Kipnuk	Housing Recovery	Home repair, relocation, and elevation	\$ 10,000,000	BIA Disaster Supplemental, NRCS Emergency Watershed Program awarded. Amount unknown. Funding gaps remain.	\$ 0
Lower Kuskokwim REAA: Kipnuk	Transportation Infrastructure	Propose funding to repair boardwalks, roads, bridges, and barge landing and make it more resilient	\$ 10,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 10,000,000

Location	Mitigation Project Subcategory	Project Description	Cost Estimate	Project Status - Funding Source	Remaining Unmet Need
Lower Kuskokwim REAA: Kipnuk	Flood and Erosion Control	Erosion control needed along 2,000 feet of shoreline: Riprap Riverbank Stabilization Project	\$ 20,000,000	EPA Community Change Grant awarded and canceled (\$20 million). Funding status unknown as of May 2025.	\$ 0
Lower Kuskokwim REAA: Kwigillingok	Emergency Management	Evacuation routes needed	\$ 10,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 10,000,000
Lower Kuskokwim REAA: Kwigillingok	Housing Recovery	Housing relocation and protect in place measures	\$ 10,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 10,000,000
Lower Kuskokwim REAA: Kwigillingok	Transportation Infrastructure	Barge landing relocation	\$ 1,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 1,000,000
Lower Kuskokwim REAA: Kwigillingok	Recovery Capacity	Heavy equipment, including a front-end loader, needed for elevating homes	\$ 10,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 10,000,000
Lower Kuskokwim REAA: Kwigillingok	Flood and Erosion Control	General erosion control	\$ 10,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 10,000,000
Lower Kuskokwim REAA: Kwigillingok	Water and Sewer Systems	Sewer lagoon upgrades	\$ 1,000,000	ANTHC is assisting. Funding status unknown.	\$ 0
Lower Kuskokwim REAA: Nightmute	Housing Recovery	Home relocations	\$ 10,000,000	BIA TCR awarded (\$150,000). Funding gaps remain.	\$ 9,850,000
Lower Kuskokwim REAA: Nightmute	Transportation Infrastructure	Barge landing repair and improvement to protect against erosion	\$ 1,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 1,000,000
Lower Kuskokwim REAA: Nightmute	Recovery Capacity	Identify funding for heavy equipment including a mini excavator	\$ 10,000,000	Funding identified. Amount unknown.	\$ 0
Lower Kuskokwim REAA: Nightmute	Flood and Erosion Control	Erosion and landslide mitigation along the hillside behind the church	\$ 10,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 10,000,000

Location	Mitigation Project Subcategory	Project Description	Cost Estimate	Project Status - Funding Source	Remaining Unmet Need
Lower Yukon REAA: Hooper Bay	Emergency Management	Propose evacuation shelter	\$ 10,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 10,000,000
Lower Yukon REAA: Hooper Bay	Energy Infrastructure	Assessment and improvement of the power generation infrastructure	\$ 10,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 10,000,000
Lower Yukon REAA: Hooper Bay	Flood and Erosion Control	Erosion control needed due to ground failure/permafrost degradation. Idea proposed to develop a regional seawall with Chevak and Scammon Bay.	\$ 10,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 10,000,000
Lower Yukon REAA: Hooper Bay	Water and Sewer Systems	Long-term solution to failing sewage lagoon	\$ 1,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 1,000,000
Lower Yukon REAA: Nunam Iqua	Flood and Erosion Control	Applied for USACE funding for erosion-related project (dock) and was not selected.	\$ 10,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 10,000,000
Lower Yukon REAA: Scammon Bay	Energy Infrastructure	Identify opportunities for flooding protection of the power plant, such as revetment	\$ 1,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 1,000,000
Lower Yukon REAA: Scammon Bay	Housing Recovery	Mitigate flooding of low-lying homes	\$10,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 10,000,000
Lower Yukon REAA: Scammon Bay	Transportation Infrastructure	Propose expanding the barge landing which has eroded and subsided due to permafrost failure.	\$ 1,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 1,000,000
Lower Yukon REAA: Scammon Bay	Transportation Infrastructure	Airport elevation and relocation	\$ 1,000,000	AKDOT&PF is raising and relocating the runway. No remaining unmet need.	\$ 0
	Recovery Capacity	Secure heavy equipment to self-perform recovery projects and repairs (dump truck, rock truck, bulldozer, large excavator, front end loader).	\$ 10,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 10,000,000

Location	Mitigation Project Subcategory	Project Description	Cost Estimate	Project Status - Funding Source	Remaining Unmet Need
	Flood and Erosion Control	Barrier wall enhancement.	\$ 10,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 10,000,000
Kashunamiut REAA: Chevak	Housing Recovery	Foundation stabilization, home repairs, weatherization	\$ 10,000,000	BIA Disaster Supplemental awarded. Unknown funding gap remains.	\$ 0
Kashunamiut REAA: Chevak	Transportation Infrastructure	Barge landing relocation	\$ 1,000,000	DOT grant application in process. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 1,000,000
Kashunamiut REAA: Chevak	Flood and Erosion Control	Riverbank erosion mitigation	\$ 15,000,000	USACE 165a awarded (\$15 million). No remaining unmet need.	\$ 0
Total Estimated Project Cost			\$ 341,000,000	Total Estimated Remaining Unmet Need	\$ 262,850,000

2.5. Economic Revitalization Unmet Need

2.5.1. Pre-disaster Unmet Need

The HUD- and State-identified MID areas are remote, isolated, and impoverished regions with significant pre-existing unmet need for economic support. The size of communities in the impacted areas range from 42 – 6,022 inhabitants (2024 Population Estimates, Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section). All are remote communities that are not connected to an intrastate road system, making travel challenging and expensive. The villages and municipalities are largely Alaska Native, with complex landownership rights and cultural emphasis on a subsistence economy.

Governor Michael J. Dunleavy’s Request for Major Disaster Declaration letter of September 20, 2022 states that:

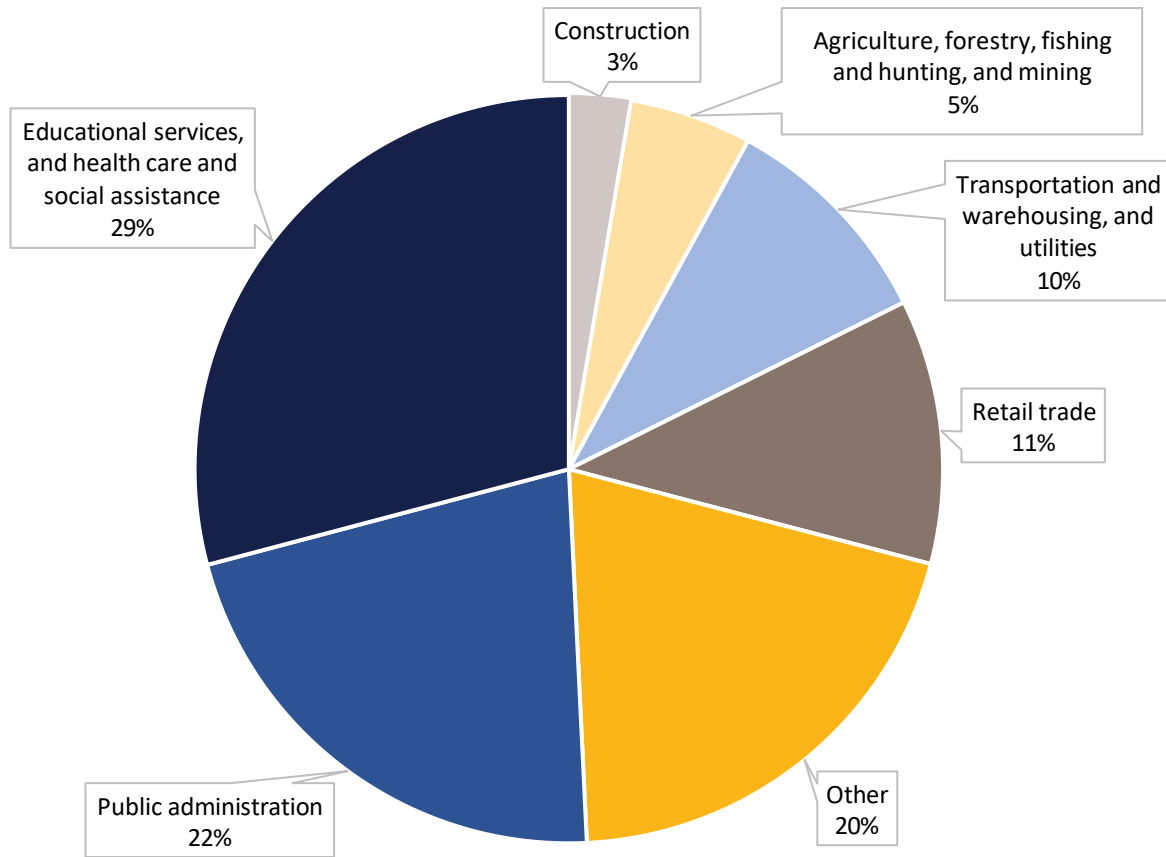
“The communities affected by this storm have a high percentage of families at or below the federal poverty level, and many are subsistence-based. For example, the communities within the Bering Strait REAA reflect the economic situation along the entire Western Coast of Alaska. For small communities within this area (i.e., populations less than 700 residents), poverty levels range from 14.7 to 52.1 percent, and unemployment rates range from 13.8 to 38.7 percent. Private property insurance is largely unavailable or cost prohibitive; therefore, almost all residents with reported home damage were likely uninsured against storm loss. As stated previously, the State of Alaska is currently seeking supplementary federal assistance for individuals and families.”

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game Division of Subsistence characterized this economy as a “mixed, subsistence-market” economy in a 2014 study.² “Families invest money into small-scale, efficient technologies to harvest wild foods, such as fish wheels, gillnets, motorized skiffs, and snowmachines. Subsistence food production is directed toward meeting the self-limited needs of families and small communities, not market sale or accumulated profit as in commercial market production. Families follow a prudent economic strategy of using a portion of the household monetary earnings to capitalize in subsistence technologies for producing food... Successful families in these areas combine jobs with subsistence activities and share wild food harvests with cash-poor households who cannot fish or hunt, such as elders, the disabled and single parents with small children.” The study estimated that in Western Alaska (which includes all HUD and State-identified MID communities), 70%-90% of households participate in harvesting or using game, and 98-100% of households participate in harvesting or using fish. Wild food harvests in Western Alaska accounted for an estimated 370 pounds per person per year in the 2014 study, with an estimated wild food replacement value between \$4-8 per pound, or \$1,480-\$2,960 per person per year.

² Division of Subsistence, Alaska Department of Fish and Game (2014). Subsistence in Alaska: A Year 2014 Update. Available: https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/home/subsistence/pdfs/subsistence_update_2014.pdf. Accessed July 29, 2025.

Employment by industry for all HUD- and State-identified MID areas is shown in the chart below. This mix of industries is typical of local economies within the MID areas.

Figure 15. Citizen Employed Population by Industry across MID Regions, % of total employment.



**Other includes manufacturing; wholesale trade; information; finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing; professional, scientific, and management; and administrative and waste management services; arts entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services; and other services, except public administration*

Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2023: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables, Industry by Occupation for the Civilian Employed Population 16 Years and Over.

Per Capita Income

Table 39. Per Capita Income in Past 12 Months (2023 inflation-adjusted dollars) in MID Areas, by REAA

MID (Most Impacted and Distressed) Areas	Per Capita Income in Past 12 Months (2023 inflation-adjusted dollars)
HUD-identified	
Bering Strait REAA	\$21,402
Kashunamiut REAA	\$22,264
Lower Yukon REAA	\$15,773
State-identified	
Lower Kuskokwim REAA	\$25,090
Yupit REAA	\$18,142
Pribilof Islands REAA	\$31,559

Data Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2023: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates Detailed Tables, Per Capita Income in the Past 12 Months (in 2023 inflation-adjusted dollars).

Employment

Table 40. Unemployment Levels and Labor Force Participation Rates in MID Areas, by REAA.

MID (Most Impacted and Distressed) Areas	Labor Force Participation Rate, Age 16 Years and Over	Unemployment Levels, Age 16 Years and Over
HUD-identified		
Bering Strait REAA	59.0%	21.7%
Kashunamiut REAA	53.4%	18.9%
Lower Yukon REAA	56.9%	17.7%
State-identified		
Lower Kuskokwim REAA	59.5%	14.3%
Yupit REAA	67.2%	11.7%
Pribilof Islands REAA	50.8%	1.3%

Data Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2023: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables, Employment Status.

2.5.2. Disaster Damage and Impacts

Concentration of Damage

Since Typhoon Merbok, the State of Alaska has worked with local, private non-profit and volunteer organizations, as well as state and federal agencies to determine the impact to residents, private homes, and private and commercial properties throughout the impacted REAAs. This assessment is still in development but is generalized below:

As of September 20, 2022, the State PDA identified 69 homes and 28 other structures with wind or flooding damage. Other structures include schools, cabins, warehouses, and outbuildings. There is

severe damage to community infrastructure, with damage to many homes and businesses occurring in largely Alaska Native, remote, isolated, and impoverished regions.

In October 2023, FEMA and DHS&EM published a Recovery Needs Assessment, available at <https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/Portals/4/pub/CDBG-Merbok/DR-4672-AK%20Recovery%20Needs%20Assessment%20Second%20Edition%20FINAL%20DRAFT.pdf>. This assessment summarized the recovery needs identified in: Chefornak, Chevak, Gambell, Golovin, Hooper Bay, Kipnuk, Koyuk, Napakiak, Newtok, Nightmute, Nome, Nunam Iqua, Scammon Bay, Shaktoolik, Shishmaref, Saint Michael, Stebbins, Toksook Bay, and Tuntutuliak.

Subsistence Impacts

Residents of MID areas experienced impacts to subsistence after Typhoon Merbok, as floods caused power outages and destroyed subsistence food stores, leaving many households without their year-round food supply (ANTHC, 2024). Lost or damaged harvesting equipment included fish camps, fish racks, boats, fuel tanks, batteries and motors.³ In the years following Typhoon Merbok, subsistence harvests declined noticeably. Brackish floodwaters from the storm surge seeped into coastal lands, soaking tundra vegetation in unusually salty water. Many of these subsistence plant species did not return the following years, including berries (e.g., crowberry, low-bush cranberry), edible roots and medicinal plants. Residents reported fewer birds of prey and other predators, which feed on mice and other prey species that relied on the impacted vegetation.⁴ The 2023 Recovery Needs Assessment identifies recovery options such as centralized food processing/storage facilities and program supports like SNAP and USDA Micro-Grants for Food Security. To address remaining data gaps, the State will document additional subsistence-related unmet needs and costs through the citizen engagement activities described in Section 3.2, use those findings to inform program design and, if warranted, adjustments to allocations through a future Substantial Amendment per Section 3.4.

Property Damage

Severe damage was documented in the October 2023 Recovery Needs Assessment (FEMA, State of Alaska DHS&EM) to businesses, private and commercial properties, as well as the following subsistence impacts, “Residents lost equipment and stored food. While the FEMA and State IA programs reimbursed applicants for damaged or lost subsistence equipment, not all impacted residents applied, and gaps remain.” Because many residents and business owners in the affected area did not apply for the FEMA and SBA federal assistance programs, more information about unmet recovery needs will be identified through planned outreach to MID communities in 2025-2026.

FEMA Individual Assistance (IA) Program data do not distinguish whether the property is used for subsistence activities. The FEMA IA data for DR-4672-AK recorded five boats. No verified loss was

³ Schwing, Emily. December 29, 2023. “Subsistence gear lost during Typhoon Merbok still litters the tundra in Western Alaska,” Alaska Public Media. Available: <https://www.kyuk.org/public-safety/2023-12-29/subsistence-gear-lost-during-typhoon-merbok-still-litters-the-tundra-in-western-alaska>. Accessed July 31, 2025.

⁴ Schwing, Emily. October 12, 2023. “A year after Typhoon Merbok, some coastal Alaskans struggle to find subsistence foods,” Alaska Public Media. Available: <https://alaskapublic.org/news/2023-10-12/a-year-after-typhoon-merbok-some-coastal-alaskans-struggle-to-find-beloved-subsistence-foods>. Accessed July 31, 2025.

Schwing, Emily. April 9, 2024. “More than a year later, a record storm still thwarts subsistence food harvest in Alaska,” in High Country News. Available: <https://www.hcn.org/articles/more-than-a-year-later-a-record-storm-still-thwarts-subsistence-food-harvests-in-alaska/>. Accessed July 31, 2025.

reported, and no damage level was indicated for any of these boats; all were referred to the Small Business Administration Disaster Recovery Loan Program.

Table 41. FEMA Individual Assistance (IA) for DR-4672-AK

MID (Most Impacted and Distressed) Areas	Count of Boats	Total Verified Loss	Damage Level	Flagged for SBA Referral
HUD-identified				
Bering Strait REAA	2	\$0	Not recorded	2
Kashunamiut REAA		\$0	Not recorded	
Lower Yukon REAA	2	\$0	Not recorded	2
State-identified				
Lower Kuskokwim REAA	1	\$0	Not recorded	1
Yupit REAA		\$0	Not recorded	
Pribilof Islands REAA		\$0	Not recorded	
Total	5	\$0		5

Sources: FEMA Individual Assistance (IA) data, provided by FEMA for analysis through a data sharing agreement, June 5, 2025.

Disruption to Business

The Small Business Administration (SBA) makes low-cost disaster loans available to qualified businesses and homeowners through its Disaster Recovery Loan Program. Disaster Business Loans are for businesses that experienced physical damage. Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDL) are available to small businesses and nonprofit organizations that sustained substantial economic injury. According to the SBA, a single disaster recovery business loan was approved for the Typhoon Merbok disaster. (Note: Requests for information have also been sent to the regional CDQ groups, but no additional information to date.)

Table 42. Small Business Administration (SBA) Individual Assistance Disaster Loan Applications for Disaster Declaration AK-00055 Severe Storm, Flooding, and Landslides (2022)

Loan Type	Initial Application Count	Full Application Count	Offer Count	Offer Amount	Disbursement Count	Disbursement Amount
Disaster Business Loan (Physical Damage)	13	13	1	\$25,000	1	\$25,000
Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL)	2	2	0	\$0	0	\$0
Total	15	15	1	\$25,000	1	\$25,000

Source: Small Business Administration (SBA). Available: <https://data.sba.gov/dataset/office-of-capital-access>. Accessed: July 24, 2025.

Table 43. Small Business Administration (SBA) Individual Assistance Disaster Loans Unmet Need for Disaster Declaration AK-00055 Severe Storm, Flooding, and Landslides (2022)

MID (Most Impacted and Distressed) Areas	Offer Count	Total Verified Loss/Verified Business Content Loss	Disbursement	Remaining Unmet Need
HUD-identified				
Bering Strait REAA	1	\$32,500	\$25,000	\$7,500
Kashunamiut REAA	0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Lower Yukon REAA	0	\$0	\$0	\$0
State-identified				
Lower Kuskokwim REAA	0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Yupit REAA	0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Pribilof Islands REAA	0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	1			\$7,500

Source: Small Business Administration (SBA).

Unemployment Insurance

An analysis of unemployment insurance claims related to FEMA Disaster 4672 may help quantify some of the impact of Typhoon Merbok on employment in the MID areas. A total of \$7,674 in unemployment insurance was paid to claimants related to Typhoon Merbok in 2022.

Table 44. Disaster Unemployment Assistance Activities Detail, FEMA DR No. 4672

Disaster Declaration Date	Disaster Report Date	DUA Claims	First Payments	Weeks Claimed	Weeks Compensated	Amount Compensated	Total
09/23/2022	10/31/2022	7	1	4	4	368	368
09/23/2022	11/30/2022	3	1	8	7	1604	1972
09/23/2022	12/31/2022	0	0	4	4	368	2340
09/23/2022	01/31/2023	0	0	13	13	3308	5648
09/23/2022	02/28/2023	0	0	8	8	1440	7088
09/23/2022	03/31/2023	0	0	2	2	586	7674
09/23/2022	04/30/2023	0	0	0	0	0	7674

Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Employment & Training Administration, Disaster Unemployment Assistance Activities Detail – State AK, FEMA DR No. 4672. Accessed: August 1, 2025.

2.6. Public Services Unmet Need

In accordance with HUD’s Consolidated Notice requirements at Section V.A.3(b) and V.A.3(c), the State conducted an assessment of unmet need for public services by reviewing assistance provided by other federal sources and identifying remaining gaps following Typhoon Merbok (DR-4672-AK). Available datasets for public services are limited. Public Service unmet needs were assessed primarily using FEMA Other Needs Assistance (ONA) data. Data gaps will be addressed to the degree possible through planned stakeholder engagement in Fall 2025 through 2026 (see Section 3.1) and relevant findings incorporated into a Substantial Amendment.

FEMA Other Needs Assistance (ONA)

The FEMA IA Public Housing Assistance Owners dataset⁵ records that owner households were approved for Other Needs Assistance (ONA) related to FEMA Disaster 4672, totaling approximately \$6,025,901.

Table 45. Other Needs Assistance (ONA) Approvals by REAA, DR-4672 (Owner Households Only)

MID (MOST IMPACTED AND DISTRESSED) AREAS	Total ONA Approved
HUD-identified	
Bering Strait REAA	\$1,354,059
Kashunamiut REAA	\$540,306
Lower Yukon REAA	\$3,339,157
State-identified	
Lower Kuskokwim REAA and Yupiit REAA	\$792,379
Pribilof Islands REAA	No data
Total	\$6,025,901

Source: FEMA Individual Assistance (IA), Individuals and Households Program (IHP), Public Housing Assistance Owners dataset. Accessed: September 10, 2025.

As shown in the table above, approvals were concentrated in the Lower Yukon REAA, Bering Strait REAA, Kashunamiut REAA, and Lower Kuskokwim REAA (includes Yupiit REAA communities). No ONA records were reported for the Pribilof Islands REAA. These figures reflect household-level ONA categories such as personal property, transportation, medical or dental, essential tools, moving and storage, and miscellaneous needs; they should be interpreted as an indicator of immediate household recovery needs rather than as a measure of public services delivered. A request to the Alaska State Hazard Mitigation Officer for disbursement data for Other Needs Assistance (ONA) funds was made on

⁵ OpenFEMA Dataset: Housing Assistance Program Data – Owners – v2. Available at: <https://www.fema.gov/openfema-data-page/housing-assistance-program-data-owners-v2#:~:text=This%20dataset%20is%20generated%20by%20FEMA%27s%20Individual%20Assistance,with%20disaster%20declaration%20DR1439%20%28declared%20in%20November%202002%29>. Accessed September 10, 2025.

September 24, 2025. Until that information is made available, this Action Plan assumes that 50% of the approved ONA funds were disbursed or \$3,012,951.

As part of this assessment, the State reviewed FEMA’s Interagency Recovery Coordination (IRC) Recovery Needs Assessment (RNA, 2023), which documents public-service-related needs—especially emergency communications, evacuation/shelter capacity, public safety staffing, and navigation/case-management capacity gaps. Reports have identified persistent unmet need in the following public service areas:

- **Case management:** Impacted communities report low capacity to apply for grants and manage recovery, with requests for grant writers/managers, direct technical assistance, and training; some communities also reported difficulty helping residents navigate FEMA IA (RNA, 2023).
- **Transportation assistance:** Stebbins’ only evacuation route was inundated by four feet, and current shelter sites are insufficient; the community is currently seeking an alternate route and a larger shelter. In Hooper Bay, floodwaters bisected the community, cutting many (including Elders) off from essential services, pointing to the need for an emergency evacuation facility (RNA, 2023).
- **Behavioral health services:** Alaska Native people in environmentally threatened villages often experience anxiety, depression, and PTSD due to acute events (like floods and storm surges) and slower-moving threats. Solastalgia (distress from environmental changes close to home) has been documented in these areas, as in the case of Kotlik, where residents were “100 percent confident” they will lose their land due to erosion, causing distress, helplessness, and grief (ANTHC, 2024). Crowded/inadequate sheltering in Golovin and isolation from essential services in Hooper Bay indicate increased need for coordinated behavioral-health support during recovery (RNA, 2023). The 2024 ANTHC Unmet Needs of Environmentally Threatened Alaska Native Villages: Assessment and Recommendations further asserts that recovery should include coordinated behavioral health service delivery under a Public Health Support Function, including assessing community health and social service needs, addressing health and emotional impacts, and restoring or hardening health care facilities, systems, and networks.
- **Services for vulnerable populations:** In 2019, the U.S. Attorney General declared a rural Alaska public safety emergency due to lack of personnel and facilities. Public safety infrastructure was further impacted in Merbok-affected areas. For example, erosion has already threatened rural Alaska public safety buildings, which provide space for jails, search and rescue equipment, and Village Public Safety Officers. These risks further exacerbate challenges for Elders, persons with disabilities, and households with limited resources (ANTHC, 2024). The 2023 Joint FEMA and Alaska Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHS&EM) Recovery Needs Assessment cited gaps in public safety and emergency communications, including requests for additional VPSOs, damage to radio towers, lack of fire equipment, and the need for dedicated, stocked evacuation centers on higher ground.

Service needs represent a relatively small portion of total unmet disaster recovery needs, particularly when compared to the scale of housing and infrastructure damages. Furthermore, many service needs are being met through FEMA IA, Tribal Health organizations, state agencies, and nonprofit partners. The 2023 Recovery Needs Assessment identifies multiple federal programs that can be coordinated with

housing and infrastructure efforts to support public-service-adjacent needs, such as FEMA PA-406 Mitigation, HMGP, and BRIC; USDA Community Facilities and USDA TAT; FEMA SAFER and AFG for fire service staffing/equipment; and training/TA pathways via AML and Just-in-Time recovery management.

Given the limited size of Alaska’s CDBG-DR award, the State determined that dedicating funds to public services would provide minimal additional benefit compared to investing in permanent housing and resilient infrastructure. The State of Alaska/DCCED will continue coordination with service providers and amend the Public Action Plan if additional needs emerge.

2.7. Mitigation Only Activities

2.7.1 Introduction

The Mitigation Needs Assessment is a risk-based assessment that summarizes the natural threats and hazards in the areas listed below.

HUD-identified "most impacted and distressed" (MID) areas:

- Bering Straits Regional Education Attendance Area (Nome Census Area) has the following communities: Brevig Mission, Diomed, Elim, Gambell, Golovin, Koyuk, Nome, Saint Michael, Savoonga, Shaktoolik, Shishmaref, Stebbins, Teller, Unalakleet, Wales, and White Mountain.
- Kashunamiut Regional Education Attendance Area (Kusilvak Census Area) has the following community: Chevak.
- Lower Yukon Regional Education Attendance Area (Kusilvak Census Area) has the following communities: Alaknuk, Emmonak, Hooper Bay, Kotlik, Marshall, Mountain Village, Nunam Iqua, Pilot Station, Russian Mission, and Scammon Bay.

State-identified "most impacted and distressed" (MID) areas:

- Lower Kuskokwim and Yupiit Regional Education Attendance Areas (Bethel Census Area) has the following communities: Akiachak, Akiak, Atmoutluak, Bethel, Chefornak, Eek, Goodnews Bay, Kasigluk, Kipnuk, Kongiganak, Kwethluk, Kwigillingok, Mekoryuk, Napakiak, Napaskiak, Newtok, Nightmute, Nunapitchuk, Oscarville, Platinum, Quinhagak, Tuluksak, Tuntutuliak, Tununak, and Toksook Bay.
- Pribilof Islands Regional Education Attendance Area (Aleutians West Census Area) has the following communities: Saint George and Saint Paul.

The Mitigation Needs Assessment informs the use of the State of Alaska's 15% minimum CDBG-DR mitigation set-aside and helps build resilience and mitigation measures into recovery programs and projects. This set-aside is designed to fund activities that reduce future risks from natural disasters and is distinct from FEMA's Section 406 hazard mitigation (which applies to public assistance infrastructure) and HUD's 15% resiliency allowance (a project-level increase to allow resilient upgrades).

This assessment does not look only at severe weather and flood risk. It considers other natural hazards likely to threaten MID communities, including cryosphere and permafrost degradation, wildland fire, erosion, ground failure (landslides), and climate change. These hazards were identified in local and Tribal FEMA-approved Hazard Mitigation Plans (HMPs), representing the vast majority of communities included in the Unmet Needs Assessment and Action Plan. The hazards were also identified in the 2023 State of Alaska State Hazard Mitigation Plan. It is important to note that these HMPs are approved by FEMA for a period of 5 years. While many of the surveyed HMPs have expired, the hazards assessed in those lapsed plans contain useful information about relevant hazards and risks for this assessment.

In addition to current hazards posed to the affected area, the Mitigation Needs Assessment considers future threats identified in the State of Alaska's Hazard Mitigation Plan and those of local jurisdictions, including available tribal HMPs, particularly as severe weather events become more frequent and

intense. In this way, the State of Alaska can ensure that it minimizes vulnerabilities to the impacts of future extreme events through its recovery and mitigation projects and programs.

This assessment will provide a basis upon which to propose programs and projects that will mitigate current and future hazards. In addition, it will inform projects undertaken through CDBG-DR, so they do not exacerbate natural hazard threats and make the best possible use of limited resources for recovery and mitigation.

HUD is required by appropriations law to set aside 15% of unmet-needs CDBG-DR funding specifically for mitigation activities, in this case totaling \$5,021,000.

2.7.2 State Hazard Mitigation Plan

The Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development (DCCED) worked closely with the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs/Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Management (DMVA/DHS&EM) on the development and maintenance of the FEMA-approved State of Alaska Hazard Mitigation Plan (Alaska SHMP) 2023, which is listed on <https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/dcra/GrantsSection/CDBG-DR-Merbok.aspx>. Section 6 - Mitigation Strategy includes the following tables, which can be found in full in the plan.

- Table 6-1: Prioritized Mitigation Action Plan
- Table 6-2: Hazard Mitigation Planning Actions
- Table 6-3: Assessment and Mapping Actions
- Table 6-4: Structure and Infrastructure Actions
- Table 6-5: Nature-Based Solution Actions
- Table 6-6: Outreach and Awareness Actions

The Alaska SHMP (<https://ready.alaska.gov/Mitigation/SHMP>) profiles hazards, identifies risks and vulnerabilities, and proposes strategies and actions to reduce risks to people, property, the economy, the environment, infrastructure and first responders in Alaska. The Risk Assessment and Hazard Analysis section includes hazard profiles for nine natural hazards, state asset vulnerability assessments and guidance to local jurisdictions undertaking risk assessments. It should be noted that the disaster-impacted area is largely within what is referred to as the Unorganized Borough, which is not politically subdivided but is instead divided into Regional Educational Attendance Areas (REAA). These are school attendance areas that enable the State to effectively identify government responsibilities and define locational disaster impacts (Alaska SHMP 2023). A limitation of the SHMP is that hazards, risk assessments, and mitigation activities are not specifically identified for the REAAs impacted by Typhoon Merbok.

The eight identified major natural hazards in the Alaska SHMP are:

- Cryosphere and Permafrost Degradation
- Earthquake
- Flood and Erosion
- Ground Failure
- Tsunami and Seiche
- Volcano

- Severe Weather
- Wildland Fire and Community Fire
- High Hazard Potential Dams (man-made)

Table 6-1 lists select mitigation actions developed across the following categories: hazard mitigation planning, assessment and mapping, structure and infrastructure, nature-based solutions, and outreach and awareness. These mitigation actions are assigned a priority based on the action’s ability to address a major capability gap or address an urgent need and be cost-effective, environmentally sound, and technically feasible to the greatest extent possible (State HMP 2023).

Tables 6-2 through 6-6 list detailed project descriptions; hazards mitigated; potential funding sources; project sources; and cost, environmental, and technical considerations for each mitigation action. In addition, for each mitigation action there is description of how the action contributes to the SHMP’s hazards mitigation goals. Table 6-2 also discusses how mitigation actions identified in local and tribal hazard mitigation plans link to the 2023 SHMP (SHMP 2023).

Please note that the requirements described in the table below are not necessarily accurate for CDBG-DR. Additionally, the actions below are included to demonstrate the range of project types identified in the SHMP, emphasizing hazard mitigation planning, assessment and mapping, structure and infrastructure, nature-based solutions, and outreach and awareness. Where possible, projects funded by CDBG-DR should support priority areas identified in the SHMP.

Table 46. Excerpt from Table 6-1: Prioritized Mitigation Action Plan

Project Type	Project Name	Priority
Hazard Mitigation Planning	Mitigation Planning Database Expansion	Very high
	Local and Tribal Hazard Mitigation Planning Support	Very high
	Local and Tribal Community Mitigation Strategies Link-Up to State Mitigation Strategy	Very high
Assessment and Mapping	Risk MAP (Mapping, Assessment, and Planning) Expansion	Very high
	Coastal Community Flood Assessment Expansion	Very high
	Alaska Climate Change Impact Mitigation Program Expansion	Very high
	Tsunami Inundation Mapping Program Expansion	Very high
	Alaska Statewide Digital Elevation Model Update	Very high
	Wetland Map Expansion	High
	Inundation Mapping Quality and Program Expansion for High Hazard Potential Dams	High
	Erosion Forecast Mapping Expansion	High
	Shoreline Change Mapping Expansion	High
	University of Alaska Fairbanks Scenarios Network for Alaska + Arctic Planning (UAF/SNAP) Database Expansion	High
	Expansion of Small Community Emergency Response Plan (SCERP) Program	High
Structure and Infrastructure	Flood Buyout Expansion	Very high
	Statewide Transportation Facilities Comprehensive Dataset Expansion	High

Project Type	Project Name	Priority
Nature-Based Solutions	Coastal and Riverbank Stabilization Program	High
	Wetlands Action Plan Templates	High
Outreach and Awareness	Hazard Mitigation Training	Very high
	Rural Resilience Workshop Expansion	High
	Tsunami Operations Workshop Expansion	High
	TsunamiReady and StormReady Expansion	High
	Continuation of Building Safety Month	High
	National Flood Insurance Program Expansion	High

Table 47. Excerpt from Table 6-2: Hazard Mitigation Planning Actions

Mitigation Planning Database Expansion	
Description	<p><u>Background:</u> As described in Sections 5 and 7, DHS&EM has created a database that contains information from every local and tribal Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) on file with the State. With this information, DHS&EM, can quickly generate community tables/reports.</p> <p><u>Action:</u> Grow the database to be able to quickly identify threats and hazards within a community or communities and generate a standardized community-specific executive summary sheet that contains hazards/threats, mitigation strategy (goals/prioritized actions), and critical assets (particularly, the owners of the assets). Establish a criterion for hazard probability and magnitude for future updates to Table 4.3-1: Local Jurisdiction Probability and Magnitude. Include interactive hazard mapping within the database.</p> <p><u>Additional information:</u> Overall, an expansion of the DHS&EM Mitigation Planning Database will allow local and tribal hazard mitigation plans, including critical facility lists, risk assessments and mitigation strategies, to be queried by DHS&EM on a regular basis and be captured to include in future versions of the State HMP.</p>
Hazard Mitigation Goal	<p>Goal 2: The expanded DHS&EM Mitigation Planning Database will help DHS&EM staff better understand areas and critical facilities that are vulnerable to all hazards.</p> <p>Goal 3: The expanded DHS&EM Mitigation Planning Database will help DHS&EM staff develop an inventory of HMP mitigation projects to reduce risks and increase resilience.</p>
Hazards Mitigated	All
Potential Funding Source	Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) and Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)
Project Source	DHS&EM
Cost Considerations	Data acquisitions, operational and maintenance expenses
Environmental Considerations	None
Technical Considerations	Staff with database management capabilities and hazard mitigation program knowledge
Local and Tribal Hazard Mitigation Planning Support	
Description	<p><u>Background:</u> DHS&EM's Hazard Mitigation Program was initiated in response to Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA 2000), which mandates community hazard mitigation planning for FEMA disaster mitigation funding eligibility. The State supports local and</p>

	tribal hazard mitigation planning efforts with grant funding opportunities and direct assistance. <u>Action:</u> Continue to support local and tribal communities throughout Alaska with hazard mitigation planning grant funding opportunities and direct assistance.
Hazard Mitigation Goal	<u>Goal 1:</u> Hazard mitigation planning will increase awareness about all hazards. <u>Goal 2:</u> Hazard mitigation planning will help the State as well as local and tribal communities identify locations and critical facilities that are vulnerable to all hazards. <u>Goal 3:</u> Hazard Mitigation planning and direct assistance will help local and tribal communities implement projects to reduce risks and increase resilience to all hazards.
Hazards Mitigated	All
Potential Funding Source	BRIC and HMGP
Project Source	DHS&EM
Cost Considerations	Data acquisition, operational and maintenance expenses
Environmental Considerations	None
Technical Considerations	Staff with database management capabilities and hazard mitigation program knowledge

Table 48. Excerpt from Table 6-3: Assessment and Mapping Actions

Mitigation Planning Database Expansion	
Description	<u>Background:</u> As described in Sections 5 and 7, DHS&EM has created a database that contains information from every local and tribal Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) on file with the State. With this information, DHS&EM, can quickly generate community tables/reports. <u>Action:</u> Grow the database to be able to quickly identify threats and hazards within a community or communities and generate a standardized community-specific executive summary sheet that contains hazards/threats, mitigation strategy (goals/prioritized actions), and critical assets (particularly, the owners of the assets). Establish a criterion for hazard probability and magnitude for future updates to Table 4.3-1: Local Jurisdiction Probability and Magnitude. Include interactive hazard mapping within the database. <u>Additional information:</u> Overall, an expansion of the DHS&EM Mitigation Planning Database will allow local and tribal hazard mitigation plans, including critical facility lists, risk assessments and mitigation strategies, to be queried by DHS&EM on a regular basis and be captured to include in future versions of the State HMP.
Hazard Mitigation Goal	<u>Goal 2:</u> The expanded DHS&EM Mitigation Planning Database will help DHS&EM staff better understand areas and critical facilities that are vulnerable to all hazards. <u>Goal 3:</u> The expanded DHS&EM Mitigation Planning Database will help DHS&EM staff develop an inventory of HMP mitigation projects to reduce risks and increase resilience.
Hazards Mitigated	All
Potential Funding Source	Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) and Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)
Project Source	DHS&EM
Cost Considerations	Data acquisitions, operational and maintenance expenses

Environmental Considerations	None
Technical Considerations	Staff with database management capabilities and hazard mitigation program knowledge
Local and Tribal Hazard Mitigation Planning Support	
Description	<p><u>Background:</u> DHS&EM's Hazard Mitigation Program was initiated in response to Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA 2000), which mandates community hazard mitigation planning for FEMA disaster mitigation funding eligibility. The State supports local and tribal hazard mitigation planning efforts with grant funding opportunities and direct assistance.</p> <p><u>Action:</u> Continue to support local and tribal communities throughout Alaska with hazard mitigation planning grant funding opportunities and direct assistance.</p>
Hazard Mitigation Goal	<p><u>Goal 1:</u> Hazard mitigation planning will increase awareness about all hazards.</p> <p><u>Goal 2:</u> Hazard mitigation planning will help the State as well as local and tribal communities identify locations and critical facilities that are vulnerable to all hazards.</p> <p><u>Goal 3:</u> Hazard Mitigation planning and direct assistance will help local and tribal communities implement projects to reduce risks and increase resilience to all hazards.</p>
Hazards Mitigated	All
Potential Funding Source	BRIC and HMGP
Project Source	DHS&EM
Cost Considerations	Data acquisition, operational and maintenance expenses
Environmental Considerations	None
Technical Considerations	Staff with database management capabilities and hazard mitigation program knowledge

Table 49. Excerpt from Table 6-4 Structure and Infrastructure Actions

Flood Buyout Expansion	
Description	<p><u>Background:</u></p> <p><u>Action:</u> Support community-led efforts to plan for, develop, and launch buyout programs. Consider creating a State-supported GIS mapping to help officials and community members better understand jurisdictional and ownership boundaries, flood vulnerability, infrastructure, and demographics, including social vulnerability. Assist local and tribal communities with developing acquisition and relocation priorities, including the NFIP's RL and SRL structures (Section 5.1.2), vulnerable populations, and additional structures identified as at-risk through other assessments.</p> <p><u>Additional information:</u> Utilize DHS&EM's Mitigation Planning Database and/or the 2023 SHMP's risk assessment (Section 4.3) to identify communities that have pre-identified critical facilities at risk to flooding and pre-identified flood mitigation projects in their local/tribal HMPs for potential flood buyout projects.</p>
Hazard Mitigation Goal	<u>Goal 3:</u> Flood buyouts and relocations will reduce risk and increase resilience from cryosphere and permafrost degradation, flood and erosion, and severe weather hazards.
Hazards Mitigated	Cryosphere and permafrost degradation, flood and erosion, and severe weather

Potential Funding Source	BRIC, FMA, HMGP, CDBG-DR, and NRCS-EWP
Project Source	FEMA, NOAA, and DCRA
Cost Considerations	<p>Buyouts provide a permanent solution. If a home is eligible for a buyout, the homeowner is offered a pre-disaster fair-market value for the property as determined by a certified appraiser.</p> <p>Buyout offers can be made for structures outside of Special Flood Hazard Areas, depending on the results of cost-benefit analyses; acquisition of structures inside a flood zone is assumed to meet the cost-benefit threshold if the purchase price is \$276,000 or less (Pew Trust 2022). Sellers may receive the pre-disaster value of the property. HUD permits its grant funds to be used even if the property was acquired post-disaster. HUD also allows the acquisition of commercial, agricultural, and/or vacant land if the buyout/acquisition supports one of the CDBG's national objectives; benefiting persons of low and moderate income; preventing slum and blight; or meeting an urgent community development need (Pew Trust 2022).</p>
Environmental Considerations	Effective buyouts prevent future damage, make people safer, and ideally protect entire neighborhoods or communities. Once bought-out properties become open space, they can provide an added benefit of floodplain and wildland restoration (Pew Trust 2022).
Technical Considerations	Buyouts require an agreement by local government officials, the State, and FEMA, NCRS or HUD. A buyout also requires a certified appraiser.
Statewide Transportation Facilities Comprehensive Dataset Expansion	
Description	<p><u>Background:</u> In Section 4, estimated values for statewide transportation facilities were not available for vulnerability exposure analysis. These facilities (airports, bridges, ferry terminals, harbors, maintenance facilities, ports, and railroad facilities) are critical facilities and infrastructure for Alaskans. A comprehensive dataset for these facilities is not currently available.</p> <p><u>Action:</u> Expand the State's transportation facilities dataset to include estimated values for potential losses for future HMP updates. This will enable the State's future risk assessments to be accurate.</p>
Hazard Mitigation Goal	<p><u>Goal 2:</u> Expanding the transportation facilities dataset will help the State as well as local and tribal communities to identify locations and critical facilities that are vulnerable to all hazards.</p> <p><u>Goal 3:</u> Expanding the transportation facilities dataset will help the State as well as local and tribal communities implement projects to reduce risks and increase resilience of transportation facilities to all hazards.</p>
Hazards Mitigated	All
Potential Funding Source	State Funds
Project Source	DOT&PF
Cost Considerations	Creating database; compiling datasets from many agencies
Environmental Considerations	None
Technical Considerations	Cooperation among many agencies will be required

Table 50. Excerpt from Table 6-5 Nature-Based Solution Actions

Coastal and Riverbank Stabilization Program	
Description	<p><u>Background:</u> Traditional engineered hard "gray" shorelines use materials like steel, wood, concrete, or rock with no vegetation and include sloped armoring, vertical armoring, seawalls, and shore stabilization. In most locations in Alaska, these types of projects are necessary. While hard or gray shoreline projects are difficult to modify once completed, they are able to withstand the harsh Alaskan environment where nature-based solutions may not be effective.</p> <p><u>Action:</u> Prevent further coastal and riverine loss and increase flood storage capacity through nature-based coastal and stream techniques where considered to be effective; otherwise use traditional engineered hard "gray" shoreline use materials that have been proven to withstand the harsh Alaska weather conditions.</p>
Hazard Mitigation Goal	<p><u>Goal 3:</u> Coastal and riverbank stabilization projects will reduce risks and increase resilience to cryosphere and permafrost degradation, flood and erosion, tsunami and seiche, severe weather, and high hazard potential dam hazards.</p>
Hazards Mitigated	<p>Cryosphere, permafrost degradation, flood and erosion, tsunami and seiche, severe weather, and high hazard potential dam hazards</p>
Potential Funding Source	<p>NCRF</p>
Project Source	<p>FEMA, EPA, National Parks Service</p>
Cost Considerations	<p>Park and/or community planners, engineers, and scientists evaluate data, design alternatives, and develop detailed engineering. Project manager and construction crew to implement stabilization construction activities.</p>
Environmental Considerations	<p>Projects should be compatible with the natural processes of rivers, climate adaptable, sustainable, aesthetically pleasing, and cost-effective. All environmental laws will need to be met and/or exceeded. Design alternatives will need to be developed to avoid and/or minimize effects to cultural and natural resources.</p>
Technical Considerations	<p>Data collected will need to include the identification of soil type, geology, wetlands, rare plants, historical and cultural features, water levels, as well as terrestrial and aquatic species. Staff with subject matter expertise/experience to conduct assessments; design; public outreach; construction management and construction will be needed.</p>
Wetlands Action Plan Templates	
Description	<p><u>Background:</u> A Wetlands Action Plan (WAP) is a guide to plan and implement projects and activities to conserve, protect, restore, and manage wetlands. WAPs can be designed to focus on wetlands in a specific watershed or region or target a wetland type or all surface water resources within a watershed.</p> <p><u>Action:</u> Development a WAP template to assist local and tribal communities in Alaska with the development of a WAP and overall wetland planning. WAP templates will focus on identifying and describing wetland resources, natural conditions, anthropogenic stressors that affect wetlands, wetlands baseline conditions, data gaps, restoration and protection site projects, chronic and cumulative impacts to wetlands reduction strategies, financing options, public outreach and stakeholders strategies, and project implementation as well as monitoring.</p>
Hazard Mitigation Goal	<p><u>Goal 2:</u> WAPs will help local and tribal communities to identify wetland locations that are vulnerable to multiple hazards, particularly cryosphere, permafrost degradation, floods, erosion, and severe weather.</p>

	<u>Goal 3:</u> Projects and activities identified in WAPs will reduce risks and increase resilience to cryosphere and permafrost degradation, floods, erosion, and severe weather.
Hazards Mitigated	Cryosphere, permafrost degradation, floods, erosion, and severe weather
Potential Funding Source	WPDG
Project Source	EPA, New Mexico, Department of the Environment
Cost Considerations	Materials/handouts, travel time and costs (if necessary), and follow-up
Environmental Considerations	None
Technical Considerations	Staff with subject matter and public information capabilities

Table 51. Excerpt from Table 6-6 Outreach and Awareness

Hazard Mitigation Training	
Description	<u>Background:</u> <u>Action:</u> Expand hazard mitigation training in Alaska. Training can include FEMA-created webinar recordings, online independent study courses and on-demand workshops. Training should focus on creating/updating effective HMPs as well as developing quality HMA grant applications.
Hazard Mitigation Goal	Goal 1: Hazard mitigation training will increase awareness around all hazards.
Hazards Mitigated	All hazards
Potential Funding Source	FEMA, Technical Assistance
Project Source	DHS&EM, FEMA
Cost Considerations	Materials/handouts, travel time and costs, delivering workshop, and/or follow-up
Environmental Considerations	None
Technical Considerations	Staff with subject matter expertise and public information capabilities
Rural Resilience Workshop Expansion	
Description	<u>Background:</u> DHS&EM conducts workshops to bring community leaders/emergency managers in various regions together to discuss regional disaster planning and response. Workshops focus on community resilience, incident response, emergency management, and more. <u>Action:</u> Continue to expand the size and scope of DHS&EM's Rural Resilience Workshops.
Hazard Mitigation Goal	<u>Goal 1:</u> Rural Resilience Workshops will increase awareness about all hazards.
Hazards Mitigated	All hazards
Potential Funding Source	State Homeland Security Program
Project Source	DHS&EM
Cost Considerations	Materials/handouts, travel time and costs, delivering workshop, and follow-up

Environmental Considerations	None
Technical Considerations	Staff with subject matter expertise and public information capabilities
Tsunami Operations Workshop Expansion	
Description	<u>Background:</u> DHS&EM conducts workshops to bring community leaders/emergency managers in various regions together to discuss regional disaster planning and response. Workshops focus on community resilience, incident response, emergency management, and more. <u>Action:</u> Continue to expand the size and scope of NTHMP's Tsunami Operations Workshop.
Hazard Mitigation Goal	<u>Goal 1:</u> Tsunami Operations Workshops will increase awareness of tsunami hazards.
Hazards Mitigated	Tsunami
Potential Funding Source	National Weather Service Financial Assistance
Project Source	DHS&EM, NTHMP
Cost Considerations	Materials/handouts, travel time and costs, delivering workshop, and follow-up
Environmental Considerations	None
Technical Considerations	Staff with subject matter expertise and public information capabilities
Continuation of Building Safety Month	
Description	<u>Background:</u> Governor Mike Dunleavy has designated May as Building Safety Month in Alaska. The Building Safety Month campaign has been presented by the International Code Council for over 40 years. The international campaign raises awareness about the critical role of building codes, including safe and sustainable construction, fire and building safety, disaster mitigation, energy conservation, as well as safe and abundant water supply. <u>Action:</u> Continue to observe Building Safety Month in Alaska.
Hazard Mitigation Goal	<u>Goal 1:</u> Observing Building Safety Month will increase awareness around earthquake, ground failure, severe weather, wildland and community fire hazards.
Hazards Mitigated	Earthquake, ground failure, severe weather, as well as wildland and community fires
Potential Funding Source	State funds
Project Source	Alaska Department of Public Safety and the Alaska Fire Marshal
Cost Considerations	Materials/handouts, travel time and costs (if necessary), and follow-up
Environmental Considerations	None
Technical Considerations	Staff with subject matter expertise and public information capabilities
National Flood Insurance Program Expansion	
Description	Background: DCRA staff promote the CRS and help communities join the program by explaining the benefits of the CRS to elected officials and other local decision makers so they will encourage their staff to devote the resources needed to join the CRS or

	improve their classification. The DCRA improves local programs by offering training, templates, models, and examples to help communities improve their floodplain management activities to improve their CRS standing.
Hazard Mitigation Goal	Flood, erosion, and severe weather
Hazards Mitigated	Flood, erosion, and severe weather
Potential Funding Source	State funds
Project Source	DCCED/DCRA
Cost Considerations	Materials/handouts, travel time and costs (if necessary), and follow-up
Environmental Considerations	None
Technical Considerations	Staff with subject matter expertise and public information capabilities

2.7.3 Local and Tribal Hazard Mitigation Plans

The 49 local and tribal HMPs identify 16 hazards that are of significant risk, and specifically hazardous to the assessment area:

- Cryosphere and Permafrost Degradation (Glacier, Permafrost, Sea Ice, Snow Avalanche) (identified in 4 plans)
- Wildland Fires (identified in 41 plans)
- Flooding (identified in 47 plans)
- Erosion (identified in 40 plans)
- Severe Weather (identified in 49 plans)
- Ground Failure (Land Subsidence, Landslide) (identified in 36 plans)
- Permafrost Degradation (identified in 19 plans)
- Climate Change (identified in 21 plans)
- Earthquakes (identified in 44 plans)
- Volcanoes (identified in 6 plans)
- Tsunamis (identified in 5 plans)
- Other:
 - Economic (identified in 1 plan)
 - Hazardous Materials Event – Ammonia (identified in 1 plan)
 - Infectious Disease (identified in 1 plan)
 - Technological (identified in 1 plan)
 - Radon and Naturally Occurring Uranium (identified in 3 plans)

The following tables provide HMP plan statuses. The State of Alaska, Department of Military and Veteran’s Affairs, Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHS&EM) provides technical assistance and grant funding through BRIC (historically), and HMGP to develop HMPs. Several HMPs are identified for update through DHS&EM.

Bering Straits Regional Education Attendance Area (Nome Census Area) Plans

Of 16 communities, only Stebbins has an expired HMP.

Table 52. MJHMP: Multi-jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plans

Jurisdiction	Status	Date of Most Recent HMP	Plan Type
Brevig Mission Village and City MJHMP	Approved	10/17/2023	Multi-Jurisdiction
Diomedede Village and City MJHMP	Approved	10/18/2023	Multi-Jurisdiction
Elim Village and City MJHMP	Approved	10/17/2023	Multi-Jurisdiction
Gambell Village and City MJHMP	Approved	10/16/2023	Multi-Jurisdiction
Chinik Eskimo Community and City of Golovin MJHMP	Approved	6/27/2023	Multi-Jurisdiction
Koyuk Village and City MJHMP	Approved	10/16/2023	Multi-Jurisdiction
Nome Area Tribes: King Island Native Community, Solomon Traditional Council, Native Village of Council & Nome Eskimo Community MJHMP	Approved	2/20/2025	Multi-Jurisdiction
City of Nome HMP	Expired - Plan in progress	2/3/2017	Single Jurisdiction
Savoonga City and Native Village MJHMP	Approved	6/14/2024	Multi-Jurisdiction
Shaktoolik City and Native Village MJHMP	Approved	2/27/2023	Multi-Jurisdiction
Shishmaref City and Native Village MJHMP	Approved	1/9/2023	Multi-Jurisdiction
St. Michael HMP	Approved	11/29/2022	Single Jurisdiction
St. Michael Native Village THMP	Approved	7/28/2023	Standard Tribal
Stebbins HMP	Expired - Funding in progress	12/6/2013	Single Jurisdiction
Teller Traditional Council / Native Village of Teller THMP	Approved	8/11/2023	Standard Tribal
Unalakleet Village and City MJHMP	Approved	10/14/2023	Multi-Jurisdiction
Native Village and City of Wales MJHMP	Approved	3/27/2025	Multi-Jurisdiction
White Mountain Village and City MJHMP	Approved	7/14/2023	Multi-Jurisdiction

Kashunamiut Regional Education Attendance Area (Kusilvak Census Area) Plans

Table 53. HMP Status for Kashunamiut REAA Communities

Jurisdiction	Status	Date of Most Recent HMP	Plan Type
Chevak HMP	Expired – Funding in progress	10/5/2018	Single Jurisdiction

Lower Yukon Regional Education Attendance Area (Kusilvak Census Area) Plans

Of 10 communities, four have active HMPs. Six communities have expired HMPs.

Table 54. HMP Status for Lower Yukon REAA Communities

Jurisdiction	Status	Date of Most Recent HMP	Plan Type
Alakanuk City and Village MJHMP	Approved	10/19/2021	Multi-Jurisdiction
Alakanuk City and Village of MJHMP	Plan in Progress		Multi-Jurisdiction
Emmonak HMP	Approved	3/15/2023	Single Jurisdiction
Hooper Bay Native Village and City, and Native Village of Paimiut MJHMP	Approved	2/3/2025	Multi-Jurisdiction
Kotlik City and Village MJHMP	Expired - Plan in progress at ANTHC	8/30/2019	Multi-Jurisdiction
Marshall HMP	Expired	11/6/2014	Single Jurisdiction
White Mountain Village and City MJHMP	Approved	7/14/2023	Multi-Jurisdiction
Nunam Iqua HMP	Expired	8/23/2017	Single Jurisdiction
Nunam Iqua THMP	Expired - Funding in progress	9/19/2019	Standard Tribal
Pilot Station HMP	Expired	1/24/2019	Single Jurisdiction
Russian Mission HMP	Expired	10/18/2013	Single Jurisdiction
Scammon Bay HMP	Expired - Funding in progress	11/1/2013	Single Jurisdiction

Lower Kuskokwim and Yupiit Regional Education Attendance Areas (Bethel Census Area) Plans

Of 25 communities, nine have active HMPs. Sixteen communities have expired HMPs.

Table 55. HMP Status for Bethel Census Area Communities

Jurisdiction	Status	Date of Most Recent HMP	Plan Type
Akiachak Village THMP	Expired	9/6/2013	Standard Tribal
Akiak HMP	Approved	3/23/2023	Single Jurisdiction
Akiak Native Community THMP	Expired	9/20/2019	Standard Tribal
Atmautluak CDP and Village MJHMP	Expired	11/3/2015	Multi-Jurisdiction
Bethel HMP	Expired - Plan in Progress	5/7/2018	Single Jurisdiction
Chefornak City and Village MJHMP	Approved	3/22/2023	Multi-Jurisdiction
Eek HMP	Expired	9/12/2014	Single Jurisdiction
Goodnews Bay City and Native Village MJHMP	Expired	6/1/2018	Multi-Jurisdiction

Jurisdiction	Status	Date of Most Recent HMP	Plan Type
Kasigluk	No Plan		
Kipnuk THMP	Approved	4/21/2025	Standard Tribal
Kongiganak THMP	Approved	9/26/2022	Standard Tribal
Kwethluk HMP	Expired	2/23/2010	Single Jurisdiction
Kwigillingok THMP	Approved	8/24/2022	Standard Tribal
Mekoryuk HMP	Expired	11/5/2015	Multi-Jurisdiction
Napakiak City and Village MJHMP	Approved - Plan in Progress	2/24/2021	Multi-Jurisdiction
Napaskiak HMP	Expired	12/30/2014	Multi-Jurisdiction
Newtok THMP	Approved	2/9/2021	Standard Tribal
Nightmute HMP	Expired	12/8/2015	Multi-Jurisdiction
Nunapitchuck HMP	Expired	9/14/2018	Single Jurisdiction
Nunapitchuk THMP	Approved	7/24/2023	Standard Tribal
Oscarville	No Plan		
Platinum	No Plan		
Quinhagak City and Kwinhagak Village MJHMP	Plan in Progress at ANTHC		Multi-Jurisdiction
Toksook Bay HMP	Expired - Funding in Progress	10/15/2014	Single Jurisdiction
Tuluksak HMP	Expired	8/8/2013	Single Jurisdiction
Tuntutuliak	No Plan		
Tununak HMP	Expired	11/5/2015	Multi-Jurisdiction

Pribilof Islands Regional Education Attendance Area (Aleutians West Census Area)

Both communities have active HMPs.

Table 56. HMP Status for Pribilof Islands REAA Communities

Jurisdiction	Status	Date of Most Recent HMP	Plan Type
Saint Paul HMP	Approved	10/12/2022	Single Jurisdiction
Aleut Community of St. Paul Island THMP	Approved	1/7/2022	Standard Tribal
St. George HMP	Expired	7/24/2015	Single Jurisdiction

2.7.4 Hazards

Below is a list of hazards identified by communities in the SHMP 2023, including their probability and magnitude/severity. Note: Cryosphere and Permafrost Degradation (Glacier, Permafrost, Sea Ice, Snow Avalanche) is a new hazard category in the State of Alaska’s HMP that was developed in 2023. Most of the coastal communities impacted by Typhoon Merbok are vulnerable to cryosphere and permafrost degradation and it is anticipated that their future plan updates will align to the State HMP in terms of hazard categories.

HUD-Identified MID

Table 57. Bering Strait REAA Hazards

Community	Changes in Cryosphere		Fire		Flood		Erosion		Ground Failure (Land Subsidence)		Permafrost		Severe Weather		Climate Change		Earthquakes		Volcanoes		Tsunami		Radon / Naturally Occurring Uranium	
	Probability	Magnitude/Severity	Probability	Magnitude/Severity	Probability	Magnitude/Severity	Probability	Magnitude/Severity	Probability	Magnitude/Severity	Probability	Magnitude/Severity	Probability	Magnitude/Severity	Probability	Magnitude/Severity	Probability	Magnitude/Severity	Probability	Magnitude/Severity	Probability	Magnitude/Severity	Probability	Magnitude/Severity
Brevig Mission			1	1	2	1	2	2	3	2	x		3	2	x		4	1	0	0	0	0		
Diomede			0	0	3	2	3	2	3	2	x		4	2	x		1	1	1	1	0	0		
Elim			1	1	2	1	3	2	3	2	x		3	2	x		4	1	0	0	0	0		
Gambell			1	1	4	1	1	2	2	1	x		3	2	x		1	1	0	0	0	0		
Golovin			3	1	3	2	3	2	3	2	x		3	2			2	1	0	0	0	0	x	
Koyuk			1	2	4	2	3	2	3	2	x		3	2	x		1	1	0	0	0	0		
Nome	x		2	3	3	3	3	3	0	0			3	2	x		2	1	0	0	0	0	x	
Savoonga			1	1	1	1	1	2	3	1			3	2			1	1	0	0	0	0		
Shaktolik			1	3	4	3	4	3	0	0	x		4	3	x		1	2	0	0	0	0		
Shishmaref			1	3	3	3	3	4	0	0			4	3	x		2	2	0	0	0	0		
St. Michael			0	0	2	1	4	2	4	1	x		3	2	x		0	0	0	0	0	0		
Stebbins			1	1	4	1	3	2	4	2			3	2			2	2	0	0	0	0		
Teller			1	1	2	3	3	2	3	2	x		3	2	x		1	1	0	0	0	0		
Unalakleet			3	3	3	3	3	3	0	0	x		3	2	x		2	2	0	0	0	0		
Wales	4	3	1	1	3	3	3	3	2	1	4	3	4	3	x		3	1	-	-	2	3	4	2
White Mountain			2	1	2	1	0	0	2	2			3	2	x		1	1	0	0	0	0		

Hazardous materials event – ammonia; infectious disease; economic; and technological were not identified as hazards in these communities.

Table 58. Kashunamiut REAA Hazards

	Changes in Cryosphere		Fire		Flood		Erosion		Ground Failure (Land Subsidence)		Permafrost		Severe Weather		Climate Change		Earthquakes		Volcanoes		Tsunami	
	Probability	Magnitude/Severity	Probability	Magnitude/Severity	Probability	Magnitude/Severity	Probability	Magnitude/Severity	Probability	Magnitude/Severity	Probability	Magnitude/Severity	Probability	Magnitude/Severity	Probability	Magnitude/Severity	Probability	Magnitude/Severity	Probability	Magnitude/Severity	Probability	Magnitude/Severity
Community																						
Chevak			1	4	2	2	4	2	4	2			4	2			0	0	0	0	0	0

Radon/naturally occurring uranium; hazardous materials event – ammonia; infectious disease; economic; and technological were not identified as hazards in this community.

Table 59. Lower Yukon REAA Hazards

	Changes in Cryosphere		Fire		Flood		Erosion		Ground Failure (Land Subsidence)		Permafrost		Severe Weather		Climate Change		Earthquakes		Volcanoes		Tsunami		Economic		Technological	
	Probability	Magnitude/Severity	Probability	Magnitude/Severity	Probability	Magnitude/Severity	Probability	Magnitude/Severity	Probability	Magnitude/Severity	Probability	Magnitude/Severity	Probability	Magnitude/Severity	Probability	Magnitude/Severity	Probability	Magnitude/Severity	Probability	Magnitude/Severity	Probability	Magnitude/Severity	Probability	Magnitude/Severity	Probability	Magnitude/Severity
Community																										
Alakanuk	x		1	1	3	3	4	3	2	1			3	2			2	1	0	0	0	0				
Emmonak			2	1	4	3	4	3	3	1	x		3	1	x		1	1	0	0	0	0				
Hooper Bay			2	2	2	2	2	2	0	0			3	2			1	1	0	0	0	0				
Kotlik			1	4	4	3	4	3	3	4	x		3	1			1	1	0	0	1	2				
Marshall			3	2	1	1	3	2	3	2			4	1			1	1	0	0	0	0				
Mountain Village			1	1	1	1	3	2	3	1			3	2			1	1	0	0	0	0				
Nunam Iqua			3	3	4	4	4	1	3	3			4	4			1	2	2	1	0	0	x		x	
Pilot Station			2	1	3	2	3	2	0	0	x		3	2	x		2	1	0	0	0	0				
Russian Mission			3	1	3	2	3	1	4	2			3	2			2	1	0	0	0	0				
Scammon Bay			1	1	1	1	3	2	4	1			3	1			1	1	0	0	0	0				

Radon/naturally occurring uranium; hazardous materials event – ammonia; and infectious disease were not identified as hazards in these communities.

State-Identified MID

Table 60. Lower Kuskokwim REAA Hazards

Community	Changes in Cryosphere		Fire		Flood		Erosion		Ground Failure (Land Subsidence)		Permafrost		Severe Weather		Climate Change		Earthquakes		Volcanoes		Tsunami	
	Probability	Magnitude/Severity	Probability	Magnitude/Severity	Probability	Magnitude/Severity	Probability	Magnitude/Severity	Probability	Magnitude/Severity	Probability	Magnitude/Severity	Probability	Magnitude/Severity	Probability	Magnitude/Severity	Probability	Magnitude/Severity	Probability	Magnitude/Severity	Probability	Magnitude/Severity
Mekoryuk			0	0	2	1	2	3	3	2			4	1			1	2	0	0	0	0
Atmautluk			1	1	2	1	2	1	3	2			3	2			2	2	0	0	0	0
Bethel			3	3	2	2	2	2	4	3	x		3	2	x		1	1	0	0	0	0
Chefornak			0	0	1	2	4	3	1	1	x		4	2	x		1	1	0	0	0	0
Eek			1	1	0	0	2	2	3	2			3	2			1	1	0	0	0	0
Goodnews Bay			1	1	2	2	2	2	1	2	1	2	4	2			1	1				
Kasigluk					x	x	x	x			x	x										
Kipnuk			1	1	2	2	4	3	4	2			3	2	x		1	1	0	0	0	0
Kongignak			2	3	3	3	4	3	2	4	x		4	2	x		1	1	1	1	0	0
Kwethluk			3	3	4	3	4	3	3	2			4	2			3	2	0	0	0	0
Kwigillingok			0	0	3	3	3	3	3	2			3	2			1	1	1	1	0	0
Napakiak			0	0	4	3	4	4	4	4	x		3	2			0	0	0	0	0	0
Napaskiak	3	2	4	2	3	3	4	3	3	2	3	2	4	2			2	3				
Nightmute	3	2			3	3			3	2	3	2	4	2			2	1				
Nunapitchuk			3	3	3	1	4	4	4	3	x		4	2	x		0	0	0	0	0	0
Oscarville					x	x	x	x														
Platinum					x	x	x	x														
Quinhagak	x		1	1	2	3	3	2	0	0			4	2			0	0	0	0	0	0
Toksook Bay			0	0	1	1	3	1	3	2			4	2			1	3	0	0	0	0
Tuntutuliak			1	2	3	3	3	3	3	2			4	2			2	1	0	0	0	0
Tununak			0	0	2	3	2	3	3	3			3	2			1	1	0	0	0	0

Radon/naturally occurring uranium; hazardous materials event – ammonia, infectious disease; economic; and technological were not identified as hazards in this community.

Table 61. Yupiit REEA (Bethel Census Area) Hazards

	Changes in Cryosphere	Fire	Flood	Erosion	Ground Failure (Land Subsidence)	Permafrost	Severe Weather	Climate Change	Earthquakes	Volcanoes	Tsunami			
Community	Probability	Probability	Probability	Probability	Probability	Probability	Probability	Probability	Probability	Probability	Probability			
	Magnitude/Severity	Magnitude/Severity	Magnitude/Severity	Magnitude/Severity	Magnitude/Severity	Magnitude/Severity	Magnitude/Severity	Magnitude/Severity	Magnitude/Severity	Magnitude/Severity	Magnitude/Severity			
Akiachak		1	1	4	2	3	2	3	2	1	0	0	0	
Akiak		1	1	4	4	4	0	x	3	2	x	3	0	0
Tuluksak		1	1	4	2	3	4	1	3	1	2	1	0	0

Radon/naturally occurring uranium; hazardous materials event – ammonia; infectious disease; economic; and technological were not identified as hazards in these communities.

Table 62. Pribilof Islands REEA Hazards

	Changes in Cryosphere	Fire	Flood	Erosion	Ground Failure (Land Subsidence)	Permafrost	Severe Weather	Climate Change	Earthquakes	Volcanoes	Tsunami	Hazardous Materials Event - Ammonia	Infectious Disease
Community	Probability	Probability	Probability	Probability	Probability	Probability	Probability	Probability	Probability	Probability	Probability	Probability	Probability
	Magnitude/Severity	Magnitude/Severity	Magnitude/Severity	Magnitude/Severity	Magnitude/Severity	Magnitude/Severity	Magnitude/Severity	Magnitude/Severity	Magnitude/Severity	Magnitude/Severity	Magnitude/Severity	Magnitude/Severity	Magnitude/Severity
St George Island		0	0	1	1	2	4	x	2	0	1	x	x
St Paul Island		1	2	0	3	2	3	3	1	0	3		

Radon/naturally occurring uranium; economic; and technological were not identified as hazards in these communities.

Cryosphere and Permafrost Degradation (Glacier, Permafrost, Sea Ice, Snow Avalanche)

Hazard Summary

Cryosphere refers to the portions of Earth’s surface and subsurface where water is in solid form, including ice, snow, glacial ice, and permafrost. Hazards of the cryosphere can be subdivided into four major groups: Glaciers, Permafrost, Sea ice, Snow avalanches. Permafrost is named as the greatest cryosphere hazard broadly affecting communities impacted by Typhoon Merbok. Many also experience sea ice hazards.

Permafrost hazards are caused by the effects of changing perennially frozen soil, rock, or sediment (known as permafrost) and the landscape processes that result from extreme seasonal freezing and thawing. Permafrost is found in nearly 85% of Alaska (State HMP 2023). In the U.S., the presence of widespread permafrost results in classes of geologic hazards that are largely unique to Alaska.

Permafrost is structurally important to the soils of Alaska, and the thawing of permafrost causes landslides, ground subsidence, and erosion as well as lake disappearances, new lake development, and saltwater encroachment into aquifers and surface waters. Usteq, from the Yup’ik word meaning “surface caves in,” is a catastrophic form of permafrost thaw collapse that occurs when frozen ground disintegrates under the compounding influences of thawing permafrost, flooding, and erosion.

Permafrost loss, due to warming climate, can impact infrastructure installed onto or under the permafrost, leading to disruption in services, additional maintenance and engineering retrofit costs. Reduction in permafrost can also lead to increased or altered wildland fire risk (State HMP 2023).

Sea ice is frozen ocean water that forms, grows, and melts in the ocean. Sea ice grows during the winter and melts during the summer, but some sea ice remains all year in certain regions. The risks associated with ice processes and human activities are greatest in the Arctic and sub-Arctic regions because of the prevalence of sea ice in those high latitudes. Hazards from sea ice include threats to shipping from running into ice; equipment or personnel breaking through ice when it is used as a seasonal platform for development activities; ice push (ivu) and gouging of the land or seafloor; and slush ice buildup that can clog intake valves. Lack of sea ice during fall and winter increases the risk of coastal flooding and erosion from storms in northern and western Alaska because the ice is not there to protect the shore (State HMP 2023).

Impacts

The direct impacts of cryosphere hazards include damages to personal and public infrastructure, increases in maintenance costs for said infrastructure, and disrupted access to subsistence areas and resources. Indirect and cascading impacts include land subsidence, ground failure, exacerbated erosion and flooding, slope instability, and other ecosystem impacts. Damage from ground failure can cause anywhere from minor to major damage, possibly having massive economic impacts with the possible destruction of critical community infrastructure such as schools, airports, and medical facilities (St. Michael HMP 2025).

Bering Straits REAA Communities: Permafrost degradation is leading to subsidence in communities across the Bering Straits Region, with some communities in a zone of continuous permafrost and others in a zone of discontinuous permafrost. Permafrost melting has cascading impacts, such as the acceleration of erosion. Wales reports high permafrost risk in their 2025 HMP. Traditional subsistence areas and trails are experiencing subsidence, and permafrost thaw is leading to foundation sinking of

homes in Wales (Wales HMP 2025). Saint Michael reported impacts from permafrost degradation, including subsidence under roads and homes. The entire community lost water and sewer service for over a month in January of 2017 when sewer lines froze; the lines were thought to be damaged when melting permafrost shifted building foundations (St. Michael HMP 2023). In Unalakleet, annually recurring ground failure/ice melt damages roads leading to the school, residence, and the airport (Unalakleet HMP 2023).

Kashunamiut REAA Communities: Chevak is in an area of discontinuous permafrost with an active layer approximately 18 inches deep. Chevak is experiencing land subsidence as a result of permafrost degradation. Buildings and water lines in Chevak are typically elevated to reduce the risk of sinking infrastructure, however power poles and sanitation lines are still vulnerable to permafrost degradation (Chevak HMP 2023).

Lower Yukon REAA Communities: Cryosphere hazards including permafrost degradation and its cascading impacts are felt by Lower Yukon REAA communities. Alakanuk, for example, experiences disruptions to its existing foundations, gravel pads, and pilings from permafrost degradation. Impacts associated with thawing of the active layer of permafrost include surface subsidence and damages to roads, buildings, and other infrastructure (Alakanuk HMP 2021). In Kotlik, infrastructure stability is a concern due to permafrost degradation. Other cryosphere hazards include sea ice, which is pushed inland during fall and winter storms, threatening community infrastructure (Kotlik HMP 2019). In Pilot Station, permafrost thawing periodically causes houses to shift in the new section of the City and roads to settle unevenly. Permafrost in Pilot Station and other communities restricts the use of the ground surface, affects the location and design of roads and other infrastructure, and requires careful planning and design (Pilot Station HMP 2018).

Bethel Census Area Communities: Communities in the Bethel Census area are in discontinuous, sporadic, or isolated permafrost zones. The land in and around Bethel is nearly all “warm” permafrost, averaging 31.2° per City grant documents. As the active layer increases each year, permafrost continues to thaw, making buildings less stable. Financial resources are needed to haul in fill and raise houses as well as drive pilings for new construction deeper, increasing living costs. Melting permafrost has impacted a local farmer in Bethel who lost over 2,000 pounds of vegetables due to his warming root cellar. He resorted to adding an electric cooler to his root cellar (Bethel HMP 2017). Similar impacts are felt in communities across the region. In 2016, an *usteq* – a catastrophic land collapse caused by the melting of permafrost -- claimed at least 40 feet of ground between Newtok and the Ninglick River, with blocks of tundra the size of minivans slumping and being carried away by floodwaters (State HMP 2023).

Pribilof Islands REAA Communities: Saint Paul does not profile cryosphere, permafrost degradation or associated ground failure in their 2022 HMP, however they cite the shift in sea ice extent as a contributor to flooding and erosion (Saint Paul HMP, 2022). Saint George has no permafrost according to their 2015 HMP, however recent seasonal ice retreat has shown important impacts on the timing of phytoplankton blooms across the Arctic. Indigenous communities depend on fish, marine mammals, and other wildlife. Reductions in the extent and thickness of sea ice makes hunting more difficult and dangerous (Saint George HMP 2015).

Mitigation Efforts

The SHMP lists strategies for mitigating risks due to cryosphere and permafrost degradation, including increasing public awareness of this hazard and increasing investment in data collection and monitoring of locations that are vulnerable to cryosphere and permafrost degradation. Coastal and riverbank stabilization programs are proposed to reduce risks and increase resilience to cryosphere and permafrost degradation as well as flooding and erosion. Relocation is identified as an important strategy to mitigate this hazard and is ongoing in multiple communities (e.g. the relocation of critical infrastructure and residences from Newtok to Mertarvik). (State HMP). Additional mitigation strategies include prohibiting construction in identified hazard areas; relocating or elevating structures at risk of damage; monitoring ice; and educating residents and hunters on sea ice safety (Wales HMP 2025). Nome’s recent HMP Update (2025) includes proposals to map the location of permafrost and slope stability throughout the community. Efforts to elevate or relocate facilities built on permafrost that are beginning to sink are prioritized in their plan.

Changing Conditions

Changes in the cryosphere such as warmer temperatures and greater precipitation are exasperating current continued threats to communities (Alakanuk HMP 2021). Permafrost is at an increased risk of thawing as a result of climate change. The potential increase in snow depth predicted by the majority of climate models may lead to diminished permafrost stability, as snow insulates permafrost from low winter temperatures. Even a small warming of permafrost can cause a reduction in its bearing capacity, impacting its ability to support structures (State HMP 2023).

Flooding

Hazard Summary

Flooding in Alaska is driven by riverine overflows, coastal storm surges, ice jams, and snowmelt. In western and southwestern Alaska—particularly the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta and Bering Strait regions—many communities lie in low-lying areas along rivers or coastlines with little elevation buffer. The flood season typically peaks during spring breakup (due to ice jams) and during fall storms (due to coastal surges)(SHMP 2023). Approximately 6,600 miles of Alaska’s coastline and many low-lying areas along the state’s rivers are subject to severe flooding and erosion. In 2019, the University of Alaska, Fairbanks (UAF), Institute of Northern Engineering, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Alaska District (USACE), and the USACE Cold Regions Research and Engineering Laboratory completed the Statewide Threat Assessment, which assessed threats to public infrastructure associated with erosion, flooding, and thawing permafrost in 187 rural Alaska communities, most of which are coastal communities (UAF et al. 2019). Of the 187 communities assessed, 144 were found to be moderately or highly threatened by infrastructure damage from one or more of the environmental threats of erosion, flooding, or thawing permafrost, with 66 communities found to be moderately or highly threatened by infrastructure damage from flooding and/or erosion (State of Alaska HMP 2023). Inadequate or aging flood control infrastructure, combined with increasingly severe storms and precipitation linked to climate change, increases vulnerability across the region (*SHMP 2023, Ch. 4; Denali Commission 2019*). Flooding regularly threatens homes, roads, fuel storage, public buildings, and community access (*SHMP 2023*).

Documented Alaska flood events from 1890 to 2023 are documented in the Alaska Flood Database. The Alaska Statewide Threat Assessment evaluated 187 communities that are at risk of flooding. The

communities with the greatest flood risk are in group 1; communities with a moderate threat are in group 2; and the communities with lower risk to flooding are in group 3 (Alaska Statewide Threat Assessment).

Table 63. Flood risk levels for communities in the region

Community	Region	Flood Risk
Brevig Mission	Bering Strait REAA	2
Diomede	Bering Strait REAA	2
Elim	Bering Strait REAA	1
Gambell	Bering Strait REAA	1
Golovin	Bering Strait REAA	1
Koyuk	Bering Strait REAA	2
Nome	Bering Strait REAA	1
Savoonga	Bering Strait REAA	1
Shaktoolik	Bering Strait REAA	1
Shishmaref	Bering Strait REAA	1
St. Michael	Bering Strait REAA	3
Stebbins	Bering Strait REAA	1
Teller	Bering Strait REAA	1
Unalakleet	Bering Strait REAA	1
Wales	Bering Strait REAA	3
White Mountain	Bering Strait REAA	3
Alakanuk	Lower Yukon REAA	1
Emmonak	Lower Yukon REAA	1
Kotlik	Lower Yukon REAA	1
Marshall	Lower Yukon REAA	2
Mountain Village	Lower Yukon REAA	3
Nunan Iqua	Lower Yukon REAA	3
Pilot Station	Lower Yukon REAA	3
Russian Mission	Lower Yukon REAA	3
Scammon Bay	Lower Yukon REAA	2
Hooper Bay	Lower Yukon REAA	2
Chevak	Kashunamiut	3
Tununak	Lower Kuskokwim REAA	2
Toksook Bay	Lower Kuskokwim REAA	2
Mekoryuk	Lower Kuskokwim REAA	2
Nightmute	Lower Kuskokwim REAA	2
Bethel	Lower Kuskokwim REAA	1
Chefornak	Lower Kuskokwim REAA	2
Eek	Lower Kuskokwim REAA	3
Goodnews Bay	Lower Kuskokwim REAA	3

Kasigluk	Lower Kuskokwim REAA	3
Kipnuk	Lower Kuskokwim REAA	2
Kongiganak	Lower Kuskokwim REAA	2
Kwethluk	Lower Kuskokwim REAA	1
Kwigillingok	Lower Kuskokwim REAA	3
Napakiak	Lower Kuskokwim REAA	1
Napaskiak	Lower Kuskokwim REAA	1
Nunapitchuk	Lower Kuskokwim REAA	3
Oscarville	Lower Kuskokwim REAA	3
Platinum	Lower Kuskokwim REAA	3
Quinhagak	Lower Kuskokwim REAA	2
Tuluksak	Yupiit REAA	1
Tuntutuliak	Lower Kuskokwim REAA	1
St George Island	Pribilof Islands REAA	2
St Paul Island	Pribilof Islands REAA	3
Akiachak	Yupiit REAA	1
Akiak	Yupiit REAA	1
Atmautluak	Lower Kuskokwim REAA	3
Pitka's Point	Lower Yukon REAA	2
Newtok/Mertarvik	Lower Kuskokwim REAA	2

Flooding events include rainfall-runoff, snowmelt, ice jam floods, and storm surge. Storm surge is the most common cause of coastal flooding in coastal Alaska (Denali Commission 2019).

Impacts

Impacts from flooding identified in the State HMP include:

- High water flow storm surge floods scour (erode) coastal embankments, coastal protection barriers, and result in infrastructure and residential property losses. Additional impacts can include roadway embankment collapse, foundations exposure, and damaging impacts.
- Damage to structures, roads, bridges, culverts, and other features from high-velocity flow and debris carried by floodwaters. Such debris may also accumulate on bridge piers and in culverts, decreasing water conveyance and increasing loads which may cause feature overtopping or backwater damages.
- Damage to water, power, and communications infrastructure from inundation.
- Rescues and injuries from entrapment in flood waters and loss of transportation routes.
- Sewage, hazardous or toxic materials release, materials transport from wastewater treatment plant or sewage lagoon inundation, storage tank damages, and/or severed pipeline damages, which can be catastrophic to rural remote communities.
- Floods also result in economic losses through business and government facility closure; utilities such as energy generation, communications, potable water, and wastewater; and transportation service disruptions.
- Floods result in excessive expenditures for emergency response and generally disrupt the community's normal function and quality of life.

Bering Strait REAA: Communities such as Shishmaref, Golovin, and Unalakleet are severely flood-prone, especially during coastal storms (SHMP 2023; Risk MAP). Shaktoolik and Stebbins also report frequent flood impacts from storm surge. Riverine and coastal floods are often exacerbated by permafrost thaw and lack of drainage infrastructure (Denali Commission 2019). Ice jams are a major spring hazard in this region.

Lower Yukon REAA: Frequent riverine flooding and ice jams along the Yukon River affect Alakanuk, Emmonak, Mountain Village, Kotlik, and Pilot Station. Flooding damages fuel storage, homes, roads, and runways, and disrupts subsistence activities (SHMP 2023; Denali Commission 2019). Community isolation during flood events is common, especially during high water years.

Lower Kuskokwim REAA: Communities such as Bethel, Napakiak, and Newtok experience chronic flooding due to river overflows, coastal surges, and increasingly severe storms. Napakiak is actively relocating due to combined flooding and erosion threats (SHMP 2023). Newtok is relocating to Mertarvik in response to long-term flooding, thawing, and erosion (Denali Commission 2019; ANTHC 2019). Other villages such as Cheforak and Quinhagak face significant flooding, particularly as permafrost loss impairs drainage.

Yupit REAA: Akiachak and Akiak experience regular spring breakup flooding along the Kuskokwim River (SHMP 2023). Floods have damaged roads, schools, and housing. In some cases, seasonal flooding results in community-wide evacuations or prolonged loss of infrastructure access.

Pribilof Islands REAA: Flooding is historically rare, but St. Paul and St. George Islands are increasingly affected by coastal inundation and wave overtopping during late-season Bering Sea storms (SHMP 2023; NOAA 2020). Higher sea levels and reduced sea ice coverage may worsen the trend.

Kashunamiut REAA: Chevak, located near the Kashunuk River, is vulnerable to spring breakup flooding and localized overbank events. Community infrastructure including schools and water treatment facilities are at risk during seasonal flood events (SHMP 2023).

Mitigation Efforts

Flood mitigation across these regions involves relocation planning, engineered infrastructure, mapping, and community preparedness:

- Newtok’s relocation to Mertarvik is a nationally recognized example of managed retreat from flooding and erosion, supported by FEMA, the Denali Commission, and USDA (Denali Commission 2019; Newtok Planning Group).
- Napakiak is pursuing relocation and elevation of key facilities due to repeat flooding and erosion (SHMP 2023).
- Unalakleet, Bethel, and Quinhagak are participating in FEMA’s Risk MAP program, receiving updated flood maps and technical support (FEMA Risk MAP).
- Floodplain management ordinances are lacking in many communities due to limited land ownership, staff, and governance capacity (SHMP 2023).
- Some communities have elevated schools, fuel tanks, or airstrips through Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) or Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) funding (SHMP 2023).

Despite these efforts, many communities lack funding and technical capacity to implement full-scale mitigation strategies. Small population sizes and high costs make proactive planning difficult.

Changing Conditions

Climactic changes may be altering historic patterns of rainfall, snowmelt, and thermal ice breakup. The 2019 Statewide Threat Assessment found that “for snowmelt-dominated systems, the maximum spring streamflow is increasing. For glacial systems, streamflow is declining in spring, in summer, and annually. Across many river systems in Alaska, the winter baseflow was observed to be increasing. Thus, while the probability of future flood events (and hence the level of threat to infrastructure) are commonly predicted based upon the frequency of past flood events, dynamic climatic trends can impart uncertainty into those predictions” (Denali Commission, 2019).

Expected future trends include:

- More frequent and intense coastal storms—especially as sea ice diminishes earlier in the fall (SHMP 2023; NOAA 2020).
- Higher spring river flows, increased precipitation, and earlier snowmelt (SHMP 2023).
- Thawing permafrost, which impairs natural drainage and increases surface pooling and infrastructure vulnerability (Denali Commission 2019; SHMP 2023).
- Sea level rise, particularly concerning in low-elevation coastal zones. Sea level rise is variable by region.

Projections show an upward trend in both frequency and severity of flooding in western and southwestern Alaska. Several REAA regions—particularly the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta—are likely to remain among the most flood-vulnerable areas in the state.

Erosion

Hazard Summary

Alaska experiences erosion from storm surge; coastal ice run-up; coastal wind scour along the shoreline; and riverine high water flow scour along the area’s rivers, streams, and creek embankments; as well as damages from coastal or riverine ice flows, wind, surface runoff, and boat traffic wakes (SHMP 2023). Erosion in Alaska refers to the gradual removal of soil, sediment, or rock from coastal shorelines, riverbanks, and other landforms, often accelerated by wave action, thawing permafrost, storm surge, and human activities. Coastal erosion is especially severe in western and northern Alaska, where low-lying villages on barrier islands and river deltas face rapid shoreline retreat. Erosion threatens homes, infrastructure, and cultural sites, and is a primary driver for community relocations in the state (SHMP 2023; Denali Commission 2019). Loss of protective sea ice and changes in storm patterns have intensified erosion rates in many communities (NOAA 2020).

Impacts

Impacts from erosion identified in the SHMP include:

- Loss of land area: Erosion leads to the gradual loss of valuable land along coastlines and riverbanks, reducing the space available for housing, infrastructure, and subsistence activities.
- Damage to infrastructure: Roads, airstrips, fuel storage tanks, water and wastewater systems, schools, and community buildings located near shorelines or riverbanks are vulnerable to erosion damage or collapse.

- Threat to housing and public safety: Erosion can undermine homes and community facilities, resulting in unsafe living conditions and, in extreme cases, necessitating evacuation or relocation.
- Disruption of transportation and access: Erosion can destroy or compromise critical access routes such as roads and airports, isolating communities and delaying emergency response.
- Environmental impacts: Loss of shoreline vegetation and habitat disruption for fish, wildlife, and migratory birds can occur, impacting subsistence resources and biodiversity.
- Cultural and archaeological site loss: Erosion threatens culturally significant sites, including burial grounds, historic village locations, and archaeological resources important to Alaska Native communities.
- Economic impacts: Property damage, loss of land, and relocation costs impose heavy financial burdens on small, rural communities and the state.
- Increased vulnerability to flooding and storm surge: Erosion removes natural protective barriers, increasing the severity and frequency of flooding events.

Bering Straits REAA Communities: Communities such as Shishmaref, Wales, and Brevig Mission experience some of the highest coastal erosion rates in Alaska, with shorelines retreating several feet per year (SHMP 2023). Shishmaref has been repeatedly inundated by storm surge and erosion, leading to long-term relocation planning (Denali Commission 2019). Barrier islands supporting Gambell and Savoonga also face significant erosion and storm damage risks.

Kashunamiut REAA Communities: Chevak has experienced erosion along the Kashunuk River banks, threatening access and utilities (SHMP 2023).

Lower Yukon REAA Communities: Erosion along riverbanks and coastal areas impacts communities like Emmonak, Alakanuk, and Mountain Village. Ice-rich permafrost banks erode rapidly during spring thaw, threatening subsistence fishing camps and local infrastructure (SHMP 2023).

Pribilof Islands REAA Communities: Erosion is less prominent but St. Paul Island has localized issues with shoreline loss affecting infrastructure and cultural sites.

Yupit REAA: Akiachak and Tuluksak face shoreline retreat and riverbank erosion that threaten roads and village sites (SHMP 2023).

Mitigation Efforts

Many communities are investing in shoreline stabilization projects such as seawalls, riprap, and revetments where feasible (SHMP 2023). Managed retreat and community relocation efforts are underway in severely affected villages, notably Newtok and Shishmaref (Denali Commission 2019). The state and federal partners are expanding coastal monitoring and erosion mapping programs to better understand rates and drivers (NOAA 2020). There is an ongoing need for increased technical assistance and funding to support erosion control measures in small, rural communities (SHMP 2023).

Changing conditions

Erosion is exacerbated by:

- Loss of sea ice, which normally buffers wave energy during fall and winter storms (NOAA 2020).
- Rising sea levels increasing baseline water levels and storm surge impacts (SHMP 2023).

- Thawing permafrost, reducing soil cohesion and accelerating shoreline collapse (Denali Commission 2019).
- Increased frequency and intensity of coastal storms (SHMP 2023).

These conditions are projected to accelerate erosion rates in most coastal and riverine communities, increasing the urgency for mitigation, relocation, and adaptation efforts over the coming decades.

Severe Weather

Hazard Summary

Winter storms, heavy or freezing rain, thunderstorms, typhoon remnants, and subsequent secondary hazards such as riverine or coastal storm surge floods, landslides, snow, wind, etc. all impact Alaska (State of Alaska HMP 2023). These events can cause widespread damage to infrastructure, disrupt transportation and utilities, threaten public safety, and impact community operations. Severe weather is particularly challenging due to Alaska's vast geography, limited road networks, and remote rural villages. Coastal storms can combine severe winds with storm surge and flooding, compounding impacts (SHMP 2023).

Impacts

Impacts from severe weather identified in the SHMP include:

- Property damage from high winds, including damage to roofs, windows, and power lines.
- Transportation disruptions due to snow and ice accumulation, affecting road, air, and marine travel.
- Utility outages from downed power lines and infrastructure damage.
- Threats to public safety, especially for vulnerable populations during extreme cold and storms.
- Increased risks of secondary hazards such as storm surge and ice jams leading to flooding.

Bering Straits REAA: Coastal villages experience severe wind storms, blizzards, and freezing rain, which frequently disrupt power and transportation. Blowing snow causes visibility hazards affecting air and marine travel (SHMP 2023).

Kashunamiut REAA: Chevak and nearby villages are vulnerable to ice storms and heavy snowfall that disrupt services and access (SHMP 2023).

Lower Yukon REAA: Heavy snow and ice events impact communities like Emmonak and Alakanuk, leading to frequent power outages and travel delays (SHMP 2023).

Lower Kuskokwim REAA: Severe winter storms and icing affect Bethel and surrounding villages, damaging infrastructure and interrupting subsistence activities (SHMP 2023).

Pribilof Islands REAA: St. Paul and St. George Islands contend with severe coastal storms bringing high winds and snow, impacting critical facilities and transportation (SHMP 2023).

Yup'it REAA: Communities like Akiachak face extreme cold snaps and heavy snowfall, complicating heating and fuel supply logistics (SHMP 2023).

Mitigation Efforts

- Mitigation efforts include:
- Development and maintenance of early warning systems for severe weather alerts through the National Weather Service and local tribal programs (SHMP 2023).
- Community investment in infrastructure hardening, such as reinforcing power lines, burying utilities, and improving building codes to withstand wind and snow loads (SHMP 2023).
- Emergency preparedness training and public education campaigns to increase resilience during storms (SHMP 2023).
- Use of community shelters and warming centers to protect vulnerable residents during extreme cold and power outages (SHMP 2023).
- Maintenance of snow removal equipment and protocols to keep transportation routes open (SHMP 2023).

Changing Conditions

The frequency and intensity of some severe weather events, including stronger coastal storms and fluctuating winter precipitation patterns, is expected (SHMP 2023). Warmer winters could lead to more freeze-thaw cycles, causing ice storms and unstable snowpack (Denali Commission 2019). Changes in sea ice extent affect storm patterns and reduce natural protections from flooding and erosion in coastal areas (NOAA 2020). Communities may face increased challenges maintaining infrastructure and emergency services in the face of more frequent and intense severe weather events and their cascading impacts.

Ground Failure (Land Subsidence/Landslides)

Hazard Summary

In Alaska, earthquakes, seasonally frozen ground, and permafrost are common causes of ground failure. Degrading permafrost, steep slopes, heavy rain, wildland fires, lahars from volcanic eruptions, and ground shaking from earthquakes are some of the common natural mechanisms that can trigger landslides. Other ground failure events are typically caused by groundwater, degrading permafrost, ground shaking from earthquakes, and local or regional subsidence or upheaval.

Impacts

Potential debris flows and landslides can damage and disrupt transportation, utility systems, and water and waste treatment infrastructure, and damage public, private, and business structures located adjacent to steep slopes, along riverine embankments, or within alluvial fans or natural drainages. Subsidence and other ground failure events can damage foundations, make roadways impassable, and cause utility outages by breaking utility connections such as sewer and water off of buildings (SHMP 2023). In developed areas, ground failure can be a result of improperly designed and constructed buildings and may impact buildings, communities, pipelines, airfields, roads and bridges. This has the potential for extensive structure loss or costly repairs; to avoid this a community must carefully consider planning and location of community infrastructures (St. Michael HMP 2023).

Bering Straits REAA Communities: In St. Michael, seasonal sinkholes regularly appear throughout the village each spring and summer. Community members have observed increasing frequency and severity over time. The village experiences buckling and warping of roads attributed to subsidence, causing

infrastructure degradation and access challenges (*St. Michael HMP 2023; SHMP 2023*). Similar trends are observed across the Bering Straits REAA.

Kashunamiut REAA Communities: Chevak is experiencing land subsidence as a result of permafrost degradation. Subsidence represents a risk to community infrastructure including utilities, critical facilities building foundations, drainage structures, and transportation and access structures (*SHMP 2023*).

Other Regions: While detailed village-level data is limited, communities across western and interior Alaska with permafrost-rich soils and steep terrain—such as in the Lower Yukon and Kuskokwim REAAs—face similar ground failure risks (*SHMP 2023*).

Mitigation Efforts

- Geotechnical studies and monitoring have been conducted in communities like St. Michael to identify subsidence risks (*St. Michael HMP 2023*).
- Infrastructure repairs address damaged roads, utilities, and drainage impacted by ground failure (*SHMP 2023*).
- Hazard mitigation plans include ground failure to prioritize resources and response (*SHMP 2023*).
- Engineering improvements such as slope stabilization and frost-protected foundations reduce damage risk (*Denali Commission 2019*).
- Public outreach efforts have been undertaken to educate residents on signs of ground failure and reporting (*St. Michael HMP 2023*).
- Interagency partnerships have provided technical support and funding for resilience projects (*St. Michael HMP 2023*).

Changing Conditions

Permafrost degradation is accelerating due to climate warming, weakening soils and increasing subsidence risk in many rural communities (*SHMP 2023; Denali Commission 2019*). Increased precipitation and thaw depth further destabilize slopes. Projected warming trends and altered hydrologic cycles suggest ground failure events will likely increase in frequency and severity unless adaptive measures are implemented.

Wildland Fires

Hazard Summary

Fire is a natural wildland management force in Alaska and a key environmental factor in cold-dominated ecosystems. Fire plays a role in rejuvenating ecosystems, by removing decaying matter and returning nutrients to the soil. Many of Alaska's ecosystems would cease to thrive without wildland fires (*State HMP 2023*).

Wildland fire of natural or human-caused origin that results in the destruction of life and property poses a serious public safety hazard. Wildland fires spread through the consumption of vegetation and other organic matter. They often begin unnoticed and spread quickly, sending dense smoke into the sky which can travel for miles. Wildland fires can be caused by human activities or by natural events such as lightning (*State HMP 2023*). In Alaska, there are four phases of fire season. Early fire season begins in April, when the soil below ground is still frozen. Wind is the key driver of fire activity during this phase,

as surface fuels are primarily dead grasses. Fires during this phase generally cannot burn deeply into the frozen duff - a surface layer of decomposing moss, lichen, and litter - and are of low severity. Peak fire season occurs around solstice, when long, warm days dry out subsurface fuels after green-up. A layer of duff is a unique fuel bed that can allow wildfire to burn below the surface for days or weeks, reigniting surface fuels in favorable weather conditions. Lightning is a common cause of these fires. Later in July, the fire season can continue if temperatures remain high and precipitation is low (State HMP 2023).

The frequency and severity of wildland fires is dependent on weather, fuel availability, topography, and ignition source. All of Alaska is vulnerable to wildland fire (State HMP 2023). The communities included in this assessment are located within the EC4 Level II Bering Taiga and EC5 Level II Bering Tundra ecoregions of the state. These regions have a low fire load, although fires do happen under favorable conditions. These fires are mainly short in duration due to moisture impacting Alaska’s western coastline (State HMP 2023).

Impact

Wildland fires that are not adequately controlled can become emergencies. Even small wildfires can threaten life, resources, and property. Wildfires that burn large swathes of forest and vegetation can have catastrophic indirect impacts. Large, intense fires can lead to soil moisture retention loss. Exposed soils erode quickly and enhance siltation of rivers and streams, thus increasing flood potential, harming aquatic life, and degrading water quality. (Brevig Mission HMP 2023). Wildfires affecting these communities have historically occurred predominantly outside of core population areas, resulting at times in reduced visibility, transportation impacts, and indirect ecosystem impacts. Many communities have limited fire facilities and personnel and are geographically isolated, relying on local volunteers in the event of emergencies.

Table 64. Bering Straits REAA Communities Wildland Fire Hazard Profile

Community	Extent	Impact	Probability of Future Events	Source of Information
Brevig Mission	Negligible	There have been 16 fires that consumed over 500 acres in the vicinity of Brevig Mission. No direct impacts to residence or critical infrastructure. Indirect impacts include reduced air quality, visibility, and transportation impacts.	Likely to experience a wildland fire event in the next three years.	2023 HMP
Elim	Negligible	There have been 15 fires that consumed over 500 acres in the vicinity of Elim. No direct impacts to residence or critical infrastructure. Indirect impacts include reduced air quality, visibility, and transportation impacts.	Likely to experience a wildland fire event in the next three years.	2023 HMP
Gambell	Negligible	Wildland fire impacts to Gambell have thus far been minimal, however there have been a number of small fires started by lightning strikes.	Possible a wildland fire will impact the community within the next five years.	2023 HMP
Golovin	Negligible	There have been more than 27 fires that consumed more than 500 acres in the vicinity of Golovin. No direct impacts to residence or critical infrastructure. Indirect impacts include reduced air quality, visibility, and transportation impacts.	Likely to experience a wildland fire event in the next three years.	2023 HMP

Community	Extent	Impact	Probability of Future Events	Source of Information
Koyuk	Limited	There have been 43 fires that consumed over 500 acres in the vicinity of Koyuk. Few direct impacts to residence and critical infrastructure. Indirect impacts include reduced air quality, visibility, and transportation impacts.	Likely to experience a wildland fire event in the next three years.	2023 HMP
Nome	Negligible	There have been few recorded historical wildland fire events.	Possible to experience a wildland fire in the next five years.	2025 HMP
Savoonga	Negligible	2004 lightning-caused fire impacted 0.1 acres.	Unlikely but possible a tundra fire event will occur in the next 10 years.	2012 HMP (expired)
Shishmaref	Moderate wildfire risk area with some portions of the island (9%) having a high fire risk	No reported impacts to residences or critical facilities.	Relatively low at an average of one to three fires per decade within 70 miles of Shishmaref.	2023 HMP
St. Michael	Negligible	There have been more than 23 fires that consumed over 500 acres in the vicinity of St. Michael. No direct impacts to residences or critical infrastructure. Indirect impacts include reduced air quality, visibility, and transportation impacts.	Likely to experience a wildland fire event in the next three years.	2023 HMP
Stebbins	Negligible	No direct damages reported.	Unlikely but possible a tundra fire event will occur in the next 10 years.	2013 HMP (expired)
Teller	Negligible	There have been more than 27 fires that consumed over 500 acres in the vicinity of Teller. No direct impacts to residences or critical infrastructure. Indirect impacts include reduced air quality, visibility, and transportation impacts.	Likely to experience a wildland fire event in the next three years.	2023 HMP
Unalakleet	Critical	There have been more than 27 fires that consumed over 500 acres in the vicinity of Unalakleet. No direct impacts to residences or critical infrastructure. Indirect impacts include reduced air quality, visibility, and transportation impacts.	Likely to experience a wildland fire event in the next three years.	2023 HMP
Wales	Negligible	Wales has not been severely impacted by historical wildland fires. Secondary impacts have been a result of decreased air quality from smoke from distant fires.	Unlikely to experience a wild fire event in the next 10 years.	2025 HMP

Community	Extent	Impact	Probability of Future Events	Source of Information
White Mountain	Negligible	There have been more than 15 fires that consumed more than 500 acres in the vicinity of White Mountain, including one fire that burned 100,000 acres. No direct impacts to residences or critical infrastructure. Indirect impacts include reduced air quality, visibility, and transportation impacts.	Likely to experience a wildland fire event in the next three years.	2023 HMP

Negligible - with first aid injuries, minor quality of life lost, shutdown of critical facilities and services for 24 hours or less, and little to no permanent damage (less than 10 percent) to critical facilities or the economy.

Limited – with injuries that do not result in permanent disability of death, shutdown of critical facilities and services for more than 1 week, and more than 10 percent of property damaged.

Critical – where injuries and/or illnesses could result in permanent disability; a complete shutdown of critical facilities may last for at least two weeks; and more than 25 percent of property would be severely damaged.

Table 65. Kashunamiut REAA Communities Wildland Fire Hazard Profile

Community	Extent	Impact	Probability of Future Events	Source of Information
Chevak	Catastrophic. The loss of several structures to fire, or of a key facility, could result in several deaths, the shutdown of critical facilities for a month or more and result in major property damage.	No reported damages, however a conflagration could be a very high-consequence event.	Unlikely	2018 HMP (expired)

Table 66. Lower Yukon REAA Communities Wildland Fire Hazard Profile

Community	Extent	Impact	Probability of Future Events	Source of Information
Alakanuk	Not reported	There have been 35 recorded wildfires within approx. 60 miles of Alakanuk since 1939.	Possible but not likely	2021 HMP
Emmonak	10.6% of the land area in Emmonak is in a high/very high fuel risk area.	There have been no fires within 30 miles. The community experiences a decrease in air quality from other area fires.	Average recurrence rate of approx. every 10 years.	2023 HMP
Hooper Bay	Limited	2006 human-caused structure fire destroyed two schools and 14 homes.	Possible that a wildland or	2015 HMP (expired)

Community	Extent	Impact	Probability of Future Events	Source of Information
			tundra fire event with an urban interface could occur within the next 5 years.	
Kotlik	Highly vulnerable	Over 60 years, 26 wildland fire events have occurred within 60 miles of Kotlik.	Possible future wildland fire events will occur around Kotlik.	2019 HMP
Marshall	Limited	170 tundra/wildland fires occurred within 50 miles of the city as of the 2014 HMP, including fires in 2005 and 2006 that burned over 50,000 acres.	Likely to experience a wildland fire event in the next three years.	2014 HMP (expired)
Mountain Village	Negligible	Since 1938, 103 wildland fire vents have occurred within 50 miles of the community.	Unlikely but possible to experience a wildfire event in the next 10 years.	2014 HMP (expired)
Nunam Iqua	Critical	Smoke from local as well as regional fires can be carried by winds with potential health risks for residents of Nunam Iqua. Visibility can be reduced significantly and disorient people traveling in the Lower Yukon area.	Unknown	2008 HMP (expired)
Pilot Station	Negligible	25 wildland fires have occurred within approx. 25 miles of the City. No direct impacts to residences or critical infrastructure. Indirect impacts include reduced air quality, visibility, and transportation impacts.	Likely to experience a wildland fire event in the next three years.	2018 HMP (expired)
Russian Mission	Negligible	Since 1940, 72 wildland fires occurred within 50 miles of the City. No direct impacts to residences or critical infrastructure. Indirect impacts include reduced air quality, visibility, and transportation impacts.	Likely to experience a wildland fire event in the next three years.	2013 HMP (expired)
Scammon Bay	Negligible	Since 1938, seven Scammon Bay wildland fires events have occurred within 50 miles of the City.	Unlikely but possible to experience a wildfire event in the next 10 years.	2013 HMP (expired)

Table 67. Bethel Census Area Communities Wildland Fire Hazard Profile

Community	Impact	Extent	Probability of Future Events	Source of Information
Akiachak	Negligible	33 of the historical 72 tundra/wildland fires located within 50 miles of Akiachak burned more than 50 acres.	Unlikely but possible to experience a wildfire event in the next 10 years.	2013 HMP (expired)
Akiak	46% of the land area in Akiak is in a high/very high fuel risk area.	The closest fire to Akiak was in 2015, which burned over 23,000 acres.	Recorded wildfires within 50 miles of Akiak have an average recurrence rate of approximately every 10 to 20 years.	2022 HMP
Atmautluak	Negligible	Since 1939, 99 wildland fire events have occurred within 50 miles of the Village. However, due to the Village’s very wet tundra location as depicted in Figure 5-14, only six have occurred within 10 miles of the Village.	Unlikely but possible to experience a wildfire event in the next 10 years.	2015 HMP (expired)
Bethel	Critical	Approx. 95 wildland fires occurred within 50 miles of the City from 1939 to 2017.	Likely a wildland fire event will occur within the next 10 years.	2017 HMP (expired)
Eek	Negligible	58 tundra/wildland fires within 50 miles of the Eek area since 1940.	Unlikely but possible to experience a wildfire event in the next 10 years.	2014 HMP (expired)
Goodnews Bay	Negligible	Since 1938, wildfires have typically occurred east of Goodnews Bay; closer to the community of Togiak.	Unlikely but possible to experience a wildfire event in the next 10 years.	2017 HMP (expired)
Kipnuk	Negligible	7 wildfires within 50 miles of the Village from 1939 to 2017.	Unlikely but possible to experience a wildfire event in the next 10 years.	2018 HMP (expired)
Kongiganak	Approximately 4,672.38 acres (54.57 %) in Kongiganak are in a moderate wildfire hazard area, while an additional 3,772.95 (44.07%) are in a high wildfire hazard area. The remaining 116.22 acres (1.36%) are in a very high	8 wildfires recorded from 1990 to 2022.	Recorded wildfires within 50 miles of Kongiganak have an average recurrence rate of approximately every 4 years. It is anticipated that this probability will continue into the future or increase in frequency as climate change may increase fuels.	2022 HMP

Community	Impact	Extent	Probability of Future Events	Source of Information
	wildfire hazard area.			
Kwethluk	Limited	Wildfires could destroy the entire community of Kwethluk. The loss of any structure is devastating to such a small community where services and housing are limited. However, even a less cataclysmic fire has the potential to negatively impact the community. A fire that causes the closure of the airport would halt the transportation of goods and services.	Unknown	2009 HMP (expired)
Napaskiak	Limited	11 wildland fire events have occurred within 50 miles of the City since 1939. No direct impacts reported.	Highly likely within the next year.	2014 HMP (expired)
Newtok and its Mertarvik subdivision	Minimal fuel for a fire with relatively flat topography in the area.	Wildland and conflagration fires have not been documented within the boundaries of Newtok or its Mertarvik subdivision.	Possible future fire events will occur but not likely.	2020 HMP
Nunapitchuk	Conditions of fire and firefighting could result in injuries and/or illness that results in permanent disability, or a fire could result in the shutdown of critical facilities for at least a week, or more than 25% or property could be severely damaged by a fire event.	Wildland fire occurred in summer 2016.	Possible	HMP 2018 (expired)
Quinhagak	Residents have limited air and marine access to hub communities and must rely on their own resources for a significant time during a wildland or conflagration fire.	Wildland and conflagration fires have not been documented within the boundaries of Quinhagak; however, seven wildland fires occurred within 50 miles from 1939 to 2019.	Possible but not likely.	2020 HMP

Community	Impact	Extent	Probability of Future Events	Source of Information
Tuluksak	Negligible	86 wildland fires have occurred within 50 miles of the Village since 1939.	Unlikely but possible to experience a wildfire event in the next 10 years.	2013 HMP (expired)
Tuntutuliak	Limited	42 tundra/wildland fires within approx.. 50 miles to the Village since 1940.	Unlikely to experience a wildfire event in the next 10 years.	2015 HMP

Table 68. Pribilof Islands REAA Communities Wildland Fire Hazard Profile

Community	Extent	Impact	Probability of Future Events	Source of Information
Saint Paul	71% of the total area is in a moderate wildfire risk area. Some portions of the interior of the island have a very high fire risk.	No reported damages, however a conflagration could be a very high-consequence event.	Relatively low at an average of two to three fires per decade.	2022 HMP

Mitigation Efforts

Mitigating wildfire risk in Alaska — particularly in rural, remote, and subsistence-based communities — involves a combination of fuel management, community planning, education, and emergency preparedness. The Alaska Division of Forestry and Fire Protection (DOF), in partnership with local governments, tribal entities, and federal agencies (notably BLM), leads coordinated mitigation initiatives across the state.

Changing Conditions

Changing weather patterns are creating conditions that leave western Alaska’s environment more conducive to wildfire. Thunderstorm events will be more frequent, which often ignite wildfires. Pests such as the spruce beetle increase areas with standing dead fuels, thus increasing the chance for wildfires. Tundra and boreal forest regions are seeing larger and more frequent fires, and Alaska’s wildfire season is getting longer. This is driven by multiple factors including increasing summer temperatures (Alaska SHMP 2023).

Future Climate Conditions

Future climate conditions pose hazards with wide-reaching effects on nearly every other hazard type (erosion, flooding, permafrost thaw, severe weather, wildfire, etc.). Alaska is warming at more than twice the global average, with western and northern regions experiencing some of the most dramatic changes due to their dependence on seasonal ice and permafrost stability (SHMP 2023).

Primary hazards related to future climate conditions in Alaska include:

- Increased permafrost degradation
- Accelerated coastal and riverine erosion
- Higher flood frequency and severity
- More frequent and intense wildfires

- Changes in sea ice dynamics and loss of cryosphere
- Disruption to subsistence resources and infrastructure

Impacts

Impacts identified in the SHMP include:

- Infrastructure failure from permafrost thaw and erosion (roads, water/sewer systems, building foundations)
- Loss of access to subsistence resources due to ecosystem shifts or ice changes
- Increased costs for energy and transportation
- Greater reliance on emergency response due to cascading events (floods, storms, etc.)
- Relocation pressures for multiple communities

Bering Strait REAA: Communities like Shishmaref, Shaktoolik, Golovin, and Kivalina (outside REAA) are experiencing severe coastal erosion and permafrost thaw, putting homes, roads, and critical facilities at risk. Sea ice forms later and retreats earlier, leaving communities exposed to open-ocean storm surge longer each year (SHMP 2023).

Lower Yukon REAA: Warmer winters and increased precipitation are affecting travel over ice and river systems, and degrading ground stability. Ice jams and snowmelt flooding are projected to increase, threatening low-lying riverine communities (SHMP 2023).

Lower Kuskokwim REAA: Flood risk, permafrost degradation, and erosion are all increasing. Subsistence disruption is a growing concern, particularly in communities like Quinhagak and Newtok, which face imminent relocation (Denali Commission 2019).

Yupit REAA: Interior warming has led to greater wildfire exposure, changes to snowpack, and earlier break-up of river ice. Communities like Tuluksak and Akiachak are increasingly affected by water infrastructure damage from permafrost thaw (SHMP 2023).

Pribilof Islands REAA: Sea-level rise and storm exposure due to diminished sea ice increases flooding potential on St. Paul and St. George Islands. Marine ecosystem shifts are affecting subsistence fishing and hunting, including seal, walrus, and seabird populations (SHMP 2023).

Mitigation Efforts

Communities like Newtok, Shishmaref, and Shaktoolik are undergoing federally and state-supported efforts to relocate or stabilize infrastructure. Agencies involved include Denali Commission, HUD, BIA, and FEMA (SHMP 2023, Denali Commission 2019). Programs like the Statewide Threat Assessment (2019), the Alaska Permafrost Mapping Project, and the UAF Scenarios Network for Alaska and Arctic Planning (SNAP) provide scenario-based climate models and localized hazard data. Grants from the Alaska Energy Authority (AEA) and other agencies have supported renewable energy, weatherization, and energy security for remote communities vulnerable to supply disruption. Many Alaska Native communities are developing Tribal Climate Resilience Plans with BIA funding. These plans include vulnerability assessments and cultural preservation strategies (SHMP 2023). Future climate conditions have been incorporated into local HMPs and other planning documents, with technical support from the State and partner organizations.

Changing Conditions

Mean annual temperatures are projected to rise another 2–4 degrees C across most of Alaska by mid-century. Communities may see overlapping hazards, such as permafrost degradation combined with flooding and wildfire. Long-term habitability is threatened in some communities. A growing number may require relocation assistance or infrastructure overhauls (SHMP 2023).

Earthquakes

Hazard Summary

Alaska is the most seismically active state in the U.S., accounting for more than 50% of the nation’s earthquakes each year (SHMP 2023). This high activity is due to the tectonic interaction between the Pacific and North American plates, particularly along the Aleutian subduction zone.

Earthquakes range in magnitude and depth, but even moderate events can cause significant damage in remote and urban areas alike.

Alaska experiences:

- Subduction zone megathrust earthquakes, like the 1964 Great Alaska Earthquake (M9.2),
- Crustal and intraplate earthquakes, often near populated areas,
- Aftershock sequences that can persist for months or years.

Hazards from earthquakes include ground shaking, surface rupture, liquefaction, landslides, and in some cases, tsunamis (SHMP 2023; USGS 2020).

Impacts identified in the SHMP include:

- Structural damage to homes, schools, critical facilities, and utilities.
- Disruption of transportation systems (e.g., bridges, airports, roads).
- Utility outages due to broken pipelines, downed lines, and facility damage.
- Increased risk of landslides, avalanches, and ground failure, especially in areas with unstable soils or permafrost.
- Risk of fires from ruptured gas lines or fuel systems.
- Public safety concerns including injury, fatalities, and displacement.

Bering Strait REAA: While not near the most active seismic zones, communities like Nome and Shishmaref could still experience moderate shaking. Older or poorly anchored structures are most vulnerable (SHMP 2023).

Lower Yukon REAA: Areas like Mountain Village and Emmonak face moderate seismic risk; their vulnerability increases due to poor soil conditions and limited emergency infrastructure (SHMP 2023).

Lower Kuskokwim REAA: Communities such as Bethel and Newtok are located in a zone of moderate seismicity. Infrastructure in permafrost areas may amplify damage due to unstable ground (SHMP 2023).

Yupit REAA: Villages like Akiachak are susceptible to shaking, though major quakes are less common. Ground failure and infrastructure vulnerability remain concerns (SHMP 2023).

Pribilof Islands REAA: Moderate to high seismic risk due to proximity to the Aleutian arc. St. Paul and St. George have critical infrastructure exposed to ground shaking and potential tsunami risk (SHMP 2023).

Kashunamiut REAA: Chevak lies in a lower seismic risk zone, but older structures and limited redundancy in critical infrastructure make it sensitive to even moderate events (SHMP 2023).

Mitigation Efforts

Earthquake mitigation efforts have included investments in seismic monitoring, seismic retrofits of schools and public buildings, adoption of seismic building codes in new construction, public preparedness programs, and hazard mitigation planning that identifies critical infrastructure and emergency response gaps related to earthquake risk (SHMP 2023).

Changing Conditions

Earthquake frequency is not directly tied to climate change, but permafrost degradation and soil instability could amplify ground motion impacts. Aging infrastructure in remote communities increases vulnerability to shaking-related damage (SHMP 2023).

Volcanoes

Hazard Summary

Volcano-generated ash periodically impacts Alaska communities, with impacts most severe for communities closer to volcanoes. Alaska is home to over 130 volcanoes and volcanic fields, with more than 50 classified as historically active. Most are located along the Aleutian Arc, part of the Pacific "Ring of Fire," where the Pacific Plate subducts beneath the North American Plate. While many volcanoes are remote, eruptions can have far-reaching impacts due to ash clouds, lahars (volcanic mudflows), pyroclastic flows, and acid rain. Volcanic ash can create severe air quality, water quality, marine, and road transportation impacts, disrupt utility operations, etc. Tephra can impact those communities closest to volcanoes (State of Alaska HMP 2023).

Volcanic hazards in Alaska include:

- Ashfall that affects air quality, mechanical systems, and visibility.
- Lahars and flooding from glacial melt and heavy precipitation.
- Pyroclastic flows near eruption sites.
- Volcanic gas emissions (e.g., sulfur dioxide) that can cause respiratory issues.
- Air traffic disruptions, as volcanic ash can damage jet engines and force closures of trans-Pacific flight routes (SHMP 2023; AVO 2020).

Impacts

Impacts from earthquakes identified in the SHMP include:

- Disruption of air travel, including delays and re-routing of cargo and passenger flights.
- Ash accumulation on roofs, roads, and water supplies.
- Health hazards from inhalation of fine ash particles, particularly for children and individuals with respiratory conditions.
- Damage to machinery and electronics, including vehicles, heating systems, and power generation equipment.
- Contamination of water sources and degradation of vegetation.
- Economic impacts on fisheries, subsistence harvests, and infrastructure maintenance.

Bering Strait REAA: While not near active volcanic systems, communities like Nome and Shishmaref may experience ashfall from distant eruptions, particularly from volcanoes in the Aleutian Islands or Katmai region. These impacts could disrupt air service and outdoor activities (SHMP 2023).

Lower Yukon REAA: Similar to Bering Strait, these communities are unlikely to be directly impacted by lava flows or lahars, but airborne ash is a concern due to prevailing wind patterns (SHMP 2023).

Lower Kuskokwim REAA: Some proximity to the Veniaminof and Makushin volcanoes, though direct impacts are rare. Bethel and surrounding villages may be affected by airborne ash, which can disrupt aviation and foul air filters (SHMP 2023).

Yupit REAA: Low direct risk from volcanic activity, though ashfall is possible during major eruptions from the Alaska Peninsula and Aleutian chain (SHMP 2023).

Pribilof Islands REAA: St. Paul and St. George Islands are closest to the Aleutian arc and are susceptible to ash clouds and air traffic interruptions, particularly during eruptions from volcanoes such as Okmok, Cleveland, or Shishaldin (AVO 2020).

Kashunamiut REAA: Chevak and surrounding areas may also receive ashfall during major events, potentially affecting heating systems and water catchment (SHMP 2023).

Mitigation Efforts

Volcano monitoring and alerts are coordinated by the Alaska Volcano Observatory (AVO), which issues warnings, updates, and aviation color codes in real time (AVO 2020). Hazard mapping and risk assessments have been conducted for areas near active volcanoes, including ashfall dispersion modeling (SHMP 2023). Public education and preparedness programs, especially in communities downwind of high-risk volcanoes. Emergency response planning in some REAAs includes protocols for ash cleanup, air filtration, and school closures (SHMP 2023). Air traffic management coordination between AVO, FAA, and aviation companies to mitigate risks to aircraft.

Future Conditions

Climate change may affect glacier-covered volcanoes by increasing the risk of lahars due to faster glacial melt during eruptions (SHMP 2023). Population growth and increasing reliance on aviation mean that volcanic ash will continue to pose a significant statewide risk, even to distant communities. Improvements in real-time monitoring and early warning systems will help reduce risk.

Tsunamis

A tsunami is a series of traveling waves of extremely long length generated by earthquakes occurring below or near the ocean floor. Tsunamis are a significant hazard for many coastal communities in Alaska, particularly along the southern coast and Aleutian Islands, though their effects can extend across large ocean areas. Alaska has experienced some of the most powerful tsunami-generating events in U.S. history — most notably the 1964 Great Alaska Earthquake, which produced waves over 200 feet in some locations (SHMP 2023).

Alaska's Tsunami Inundation Mapping Program has produced inundation maps for several western Alaska communities. These communities include: Shishmaref, Wales, Unalakleet, Golovin, Shaktoolik, Platinum, St. George, and St. Paul. This mapping program continues to expand (AEC Inundation Mapping Project).

Impacts

Tsunamis can arrive within minutes of a nearby earthquake, leaving little time for evacuation. They can cause catastrophic flooding, erosion, debris impact, loss of life, and destruction of critical infrastructure. Impacts identified in the SHMP include:

- Loss of life and injury due to rapid-onset, high-energy wave impacts.
- Severe flooding and coastal erosion, damaging homes, public buildings, and roads.
- Debris impacts from marine and built structures.
- Disruption of transportation and utilities, particularly in port or harbor communities.
- Economic disruption due to damage to fisheries, transportation, fuel infrastructure, and public services.

Bering Strait REAA: Most communities (e.g., Nome, Shishmaref) are not highly exposed to tsunami inundation from distant-source events but may face low-probability, high-impact risks from submarine landslides or local seismic events (SHMP 2023).

Lower Yukon REAA: These inland communities are not exposed to tsunami hazards due to their distance from the ocean.

Lower Kuskokwim REAA: Coastal communities such as Quinhagak, Toksook Bay, and Platinum face some exposure to tsunami waves, particularly from nearshore earthquakes or submarine landslides in the Bering Sea or Kuskokwim Bay (SHMP 2023).

Yupit REAA: Mostly inland communities; minimal tsunami risk.

Pribilof Islands REAA: St. Paul and St. George Islands are potentially exposed to tsunami waves generated from Aleutian subduction zone earthquakes, with potential impacts to harbors and low-lying infrastructure (SHMP 2023).

Kashunamiut REAA: Coastal locations like Chevak may have limited tsunami exposure but are more vulnerable to severe coastal storms and erosion than tsunamis specifically (SHMP 2023).

Mitigation Efforts

Alaska participates in the National Tsunami Hazard Mitigation Program (NTHMP), with real-time monitoring and alert systems via NOAA and the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center (NOAA NWS 2023). Tsunami evacuation planning and signage are in place in high-risk coastal communities. Hazard mapping and inundation modeling have been completed for many communities through efforts by the Alaska Division of Geological & Geophysical Surveys (DGGS) and NOAA, although many communities have not been individually mapped (SHMP 2023). Community education and drills, including participation in “Tsunami Awareness Week” and local hazard awareness programs (SHMP 2023). Sirens and local alert systems have been installed in some vulnerable communities to support rapid evacuation. Infrastructure relocation or elevation projects have been undertaken in select communities to move critical assets out of inundation zones.

Other

The following hazards were identified in a small number of HMPs and are not extensively assessed here.

- Radon / Naturally Occurring Uranium
- Hazardous Materials Event – Ammonia

- Infectious Disease
- Economic
- Technological

2.7.6 Indispensable Services

Indispensable services are those that enable the continuous operation of critical business and government functions and/or are critical to human health and safety and economic security. As part of the HMP process, each jurisdiction with a plan identified critical facilities that could be impacted during and/or needed immediately after a natural disaster. The types of facilities are summarized below.

- Government facilities, such as tribal and city administrative offices
- Educational facilities
- Emergency response facilities, including police departments, fire stations and VPSO offices
- Community gathering places, such as community and youth centers and churches
- Care facilities, such as medical clinics
- Utilities, such as electric generation, communications, water and wastewater treatment, sewage lagoons, landfills, and fuel tanks.
- Businesses including grocery stores, hardware stores, and banks

2.7.7 Mitigation Actions

When using CDBG-DR funds for mitigation-only activities, grantees must demonstrate that the activities 1) meet the definition of mitigation activities; 2) address identified risks in the MID areas and a direct or indirect impact from the disaster; and 3) meet a national objective. The activities must also be CDBG-eligible. These criteria collectively are applicable only when a grantee is pursuing a mitigation-only activity that is not connected to an otherwise eligible CDBG-DR activity that would be responding to a remaining unmet recovery need.

In October 2023, FEMA and DHS&EM published a Recovery Needs Assessment available at:

<https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/Portals/4/pub/CDBG-Merbok/DR-4672-AK%20Recovery%20Needs%20Assessment%20Second%20Edition%20FINAL%20DRAFT.pdf>. This assessment summarized the recovery needs identified in: Chefornek, Chevak, Gambell, Golovin, Hooper Bay, Kipnuk, Koyuk, Napakiak, Newtok, Nightmute, Nome, Nunam Iqua, Scammon Bay, Shaktoolik, Shishmaref, Saint Michael, Stebbins, Toksook Bay, and Tuntutuliak.

In October 2023, FEMA and DHS&EM published a Recovery Strategy available at:

<https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/Portals/4/pub/CDBG-Merbok/DR-4672-AK%20Recovery%20Strategy%20FINAL.pdf>. This strategy summarized the planned and proposed projects contributing to a whole-of-community recovery in the area of western Alaska impacted by the remnants of Typhoon Merbok (DR-4672-AK) in the following communities: Chevak, Golovin, Hooper Bay, Kipnuk, Koyuk, Nightmute, Nunam Iqua, Scammon Bay, Saint Michael, Stebbins, Toksook Bay and Tuntutuliak.

Additionally, existing Hazard Mitigation Plans (HMPs) completed after Typhoon Merbok were surveyed for identified mitigation actions. The complete list of prioritized mitigation actions can be found in each

jurisdiction's Hazard Mitigation Plan, which is searchable here:

<https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/dcra/admin/PlanMgmt?menuLibraryTypeID=2>. Further community engagement may identify additional plans to survey for mitigation projects.

Unmet Needs Identified in the October 2023 Recovery Needs Assessment

Erosion

Coastal communities in remote western Alaska rely on erosion mitigation measures such as seawalls, berms, and gabion baskets to protect homes, businesses, and public infrastructure against erosion. Some flood risk management measures were damaged or destroyed during the storm. In other cases, the storm exacerbated existing erosion and created the necessity for new measures.

The Interagency Recovery Coordination (IRC) Team worked with nine (9) communities: Chevak, Hooper Bay, Kipnuk, Nunam Iqua, Scammon Bay, Saint Michael, Stebbins, Toksook Bay, and Tuntutuliak; to submit applications to the USACE 165a Pilot Program. This program can fund 100 percent of the cost of projects that address flood, ecosystem, bank erosion, and/or navigational improvements for up to 20 economically disadvantaged communities nationwide. Chevak was awarded funding to reduce the risk of erosion along the right bank of the Ninglikfak River.

Outstanding Erosion-Related Needs

- Communities that did not receive USACE grant funding include St. Michael, Stebbins, Nunam Iqua, Scammon Bay, Hooper Bay, Toksook Bay, Kipnuk, Tuntutuliak. These communities will need to seek alternative sources of funding for erosion measures.
- Golovin has decided not to move forward on the 165a project for a rock revetment and may need an alternative source of funding to protect the power plant area.

Possible Funding Sources

USACE Section 165a Pilot Program Continuing Authority Projects in Small or Disadvantaged

Communities: Will fund 100 percent of the cost of projects that address flood, ecosystem, and/or bank erosion, navigational improvements for up to 20 economically disadvantaged communities nationwide as part of a pilot program. May be used for erosion measures near landfills.

FEMA Public Assistance (PA): 406 Mitigation - Funds work to protect damaged facilities against future damage, restore facilities, encourage hazard-resistant design, relocation of facilities (from hazard prone areas).

FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program: Funds provided to state, local, tribal, and territorial governments so they can rebuild in a way that reduces, or mitigates, future disaster losses in their communities.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Continuing Authorities Program (CAP) Small Beach Erosion

Control: Provides protection or restoration of public shorelines by construction of revetments, groins, and jetties.

USACE Continuing Authorities Program (CAP) Small Flood Risk Management: The Small Flood Risk Management Program (Section 205) provides a continuing authority for USACE to construct projects (structural or nonstructural) to reduce damages caused by flooding in urban areas, towns, and villages.

Environmental Protection Agency Indian General Assistance Program (EPA IGAP): This program helps tribes develop capacity to administer environmental programs.

Emergency Management

Communities expressed a desire to be more prepared for the next storm by strengthening communications infrastructure, repairing shelters, building response teams, and informing themselves on the Stafford Act.

The Interagency Recovery Coordination (IRC) Team provided information on the FEMA Individual (IA) programs to communities who asked for it. The FEMA Hazard Mitigation Advisor helped at least four communities submit Notices of Intent to update hazard mitigation plans, the first step in unlocking Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funding that could address some remaining needs.

Outstanding Emergency Management-Related Needs

- Communities have identified a number of general emergency preparedness unmet needs, such as new emergency communications equipment with backup power options. Note that many of these needs are not eligible for mitigation funding under CDBG or some of the listed FEMA programs.
- Gambell - The community would like to build a new evacuation center on higher ground along the road to Savoonga. They would like a permanent structure, a steel building with concrete floors, that can withstand intensifying storms and is fully stocked with enough water, food, power, etc., to sustain 800-1,000 community members for at least 2 months.
- Golovin - The Village Public Safety Officer (VPSO) proposed the idea of a fully stocked emergency shelter facility, expressing concern that the community does not have a facility that can comfortably serve this purpose. The Tribal Office was used as a shelter after Typhoon Merbok, some residents had to camp outside.
- Hooper Bay - The community has never experienced floodwaters reaching this far into their village, nor has their community ever been bisected from flooding before. Community representatives want an emergency evacuation facility to provide residents of the "old town" a safe place to go if a similar flooding event were to occur. The community identified a building in "old town" that could potentially be used for an evacuation facility, but it would require funding to retrofit the building to meet proper structural and fortification standards.
- Kipnuk - The community currently uses the school as an evacuation site, but representatives indicated they could use a dedicated building for an evacuation center that also functions as a community center. Representatives shared they would like to connect new Elder Housing, the proposed community center, a new proposed temporary shelter for domestic violence victims, and a proposed Head Start Building to the existing Public Safety Facility.
- Stebbins - Current evacuation sites, i.e., the school, and the IRA building are insufficient to shelter residents. The community would like a new, larger evacuation center/multi-purpose building.
- Tuntutuliak - The community does not have firefighting equipment.

Possible Funding Sources

USDA Rural Development Community Facilities Loan/Grant Program: Can assist with things like fire equipment and emergency communication equipment.

USDA Community Facilities Technical Assistance and Training (TAT) Grant: Intended to address capacity challenges faced by small, low-income rural communities with limited resources and staff. Helps communities access USDA funding for essential community facilities.

Alaska Department of Natural Resources Fire Protection Volunteer Fire Assistance Grant: Provides assistance in training, equipment purchases, and prevention activities, on a cost share basis. The assistance is provided to increase firefighter safety, improve the firefighting capabilities of rural volunteer fire departments, and enhance protection in the urban-wildland interface.

FEMA Fire Prevention and Safety Grants: Provides critically needed resources to carry out fire prevention education and training, fire code enforcement, fire/arson investigation, firefighter safety and health programming, prevention efforts, and research and development.

FEMA Staffing for Adequate Fire & Emergency Response (SAFER): Assists local fire departments with staffing and deployment capabilities in order to respond to emergencies and assure that communities have adequate protection from fire and fire-related hazards.

FEMA Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) Program: Enhances the safety of the public & firefighters by providing direct financial assistance to eligible fire departments, nonaffiliated EMS organizations, & State Fire Training Academies for critically needed resources to equip/train emergency personnel.

FEMA Public Assistance (PA): 406 Mitigation - Funds work to protect damaged facilities against future damage, restore facilities, encourage hazard-resistant design, relocation of facilities (from hazard prone areas).

FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program: Funds provided to state, local, tribal, and territorial governments so they can rebuild in a way that reduces, or mitigates, future disaster losses in their communities.

Outstanding Wastewater Management-Related Needs

- There are identified needs to make upgrades to utility equipment in order to withstand future storm events.

Possible Funding Sources

Village Safe Water Capital Improvement Program and Related Programs: The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Indian Health Service (IHS), USDA-RD, and the ANTHC work together to collectively fund sanitation projects in the impacted area. IRC will identify and monitor planned construction efforts that will contribute to the resilience of water and wastewater infrastructure.

Indian Health Service (IHS) Sanitation Facilities Construction Program: Provides technical and financial assistance to American Tribes and Alaska Native villages for the cooperative development and construction of safe drinking water supply, sewage, and solid waste disposal facilities, and related support facilities. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law bill directs the Indian Health Service to use up to \$2.2 billion of the \$3.5 billion appropriation on economically infeasible projects.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Public Assistance (PA) Grant Program: Provides supplemental grants to state, tribal, territorial, and local governments, and certain types of private non-profits so communities can quickly respond to and recover from major disasters or emergencies.

Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG-DR): Funding for eligible Indian Tribes and Alaska Native Villages to help with recovery efforts from presidentially declared disasters and improve the housing stock, provide community facilities, and make infrastructure improvements.

USDA-RD Water & Environmental Programs: Several funding programs are available to help with impacts to community infrastructure systems for drinking water, waste disposal, landfills, washeterias, and decentralized systems.

USACE Continuing Authorities Program (CAP) Small Beach Erosion Control: Provides protection or restoration of public shorelines by construction of revetments, groins⁷, and jetties.

USACE Continuing Authorities Program (CAP) Small Flood Risk Management: The Small Flood Risk Management Program (Section 205) provides a continuing authority for USACE to construct projects (structural or nonstructural) to reduce damages caused by flooding in urban areas, towns, and villages.

Outstanding Housing Recovery-Related Needs

- Many communities experienced residential displacement and need to rebuild in a way that mitigates risks from erosion and flooding.

Possible Funding Sources

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Emergency Watershed Protection Program: Offers vital recovery options for local communities to help reduce hazards to life and property caused by floodwaters, droughts, wildfires, earthquakes, windstorms, and other natural disasters. Project funds address erosion related watershed activities. Can pay for the relocation of homes.

USDA Rural Disaster Home Repair Grant Program: Through this program, eligible homeowners may apply to receive grants of up to \$40,675 directly from USDA to repair their homes.

Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Emergency Aid to Tribal Government: Covers destroyed or damaged homes, damaged property boundary markers, replacement of subsistence food and food harvesting equipment, solid waste collection and removal, and minor construction associated with infrastructure and homes.

Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (VOAD) Mission: Voluntary agencies conducted a mission to help residents prepare repair materials lists in Hooper Bay and Stebbins. They may return to help rebuild later in the summer.

Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG-DR): Funding for eligible Indian Tribes and Alaska Native Villages to help improve the housing stock, provide community facilities, make infrastructure improvements, fund microenterprises, and expand job opportunities.

Outstanding Solid Waste Disposal-Related Needs

- There is an identified need to mitigate impacts of erosion, flooding, and other hazards to solid waste infrastructure and to incorporate mitigation into solid waste disposal planning.

Possible Funding Sources

IHS Sanitation Facilities Construction Program: Provides technical and financial assistance to American Tribes and Alaska Native villages for the cooperative development and construction of safe drinking water supply, sewage, and solid waste disposal facilities, and related support facilities. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law bill directs the Indian Health Service to use up to \$2.2 billion of the \$3.5 billion appropriation on economically infeasible projects.

FEMA PA Grant Program: Provides supplemental grants to state, tribal, territorial, and local governments, and certain types of private non-profits so communities can quickly respond to and recover from major disasters or emergencies.

ADEC Solid Waste Program: Regulates health and environmental compliance at solid waste facilities through a combination of design review, permits and authorizations, inspections, monitoring, and compliance assistance.

Alaska Backhaul Program: The EPA-funded backhaul program is a long-term program in which a community collects, stores, and backhauls specified materials out of the community on a regular basis.

Sanitary Deficiency System (SDS): The SDS contains a list of identified sanitation issues that state, federal, regional health partners use to prioritize projects.

USDA-RD Water & Environmental Programs: Several funding programs are available to help with impacts to community infrastructure systems for drinking water, waste disposal, landfills, washeterias and decentralized systems.

USACE Continuing Authorities Program (CAP) Small Beach Erosion Control: Provides protection or restoration of public shorelines by construction of revetments, groins, and jetties.

USACE Continuing Authorities Program (CAP) Small Flood Risk Management: The Small Flood Risk Management Program (Section 205) provides a continuing authority for USACE to construct projects (structural or nonstructural) to reduce damages caused by flooding in urban areas, towns, and villages.

Outstanding Damaged Cemeteries, Churches, and Artifacts-Related Needs

- Repair and improvement needs were identified in Hooper Bay, Kipnuk, Koyuk, Nunam Iqua, St. Michael, Stebbins, Toksook Bay, and Tuntutuliak.

Possible Funding Sources

PA Public Assistance Grant Program: Provides supplemental grants to state, tribal, territorial, and local governments, and certain types of private non-profits so communities can quickly respond to and recover from major disasters or emergencies. Applicants can receive reimbursement for eligible damages to cemeteries, e.g., to grave markers and fencing.

NCR RSF Working Group Sessions on Cemeteries: The NCR RSF Field Coordinator facilitates sessions with Federal, State, and Local stakeholders who can contribute expertise and/or funding.

National Park Service (NPS) National Center for Preservation Technology: This program provides technical assistance on online resources for cemetery recovery.

Cemetery Recovery Guidebook for Communities: A representative of the Alaska Department of Military and Veterans Affairs is working on a guidebook for communities experiencing erosion to their

cemeteries. He hopes to complete it by January 2024. § National Endowment for the Humanities Grant – This grant for archaeological field research may help communities with damaged/uncovered artifacts.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Disaster Mortuary Operational Response Team:

Composed of personnel with different fields of expertise who can assist local authorities in managing the remains of the deceased.

Alaska Office of History and Archaeology (OHA): Can conduct surveys and provide technical assistance.

National Park Service Tribal Heritage Grant: Provides grants to Federally recognized Indian Tribes for cultural and historic preservation projects

USDA-RD Community Facilities Direct Loan and Grant Program: This program provides affordable funding to develop essential community facilities in rural areas. May pay for heavy equipment to build a new cemetery.

BIA Emergency Aid to Tribal Governments: Covers destroyed or damaged homes, damaged property boundary markers, replacement of subsistence food and food harvesting equipment, solid waste collection and removal, and minor construction associated with infrastructure and homes.

USACE Continuing Authorities Program (CAP) Small Flood Risk Management: The Small Flood Risk Management Program (Section 205) provides a continuing authority for USACE to construct projects (structural or nonstructural) to reduce damages caused by flooding in urban areas, towns, and villages.

University of Alaska: Potential for a partnership with Alaska universities for research and assessment of archeological sites.

Alaska Native Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) Section 1318: Alaska Native groups and corporations may request assistance from the U.S Department of the Interior for the preservation, display, and interpretation of cultural resources.

Outstanding Drinking Water-Related Needs:

- The need for an assessment of the water treatment and distribution system was identified in multiple communities that were surveyed. These assessments should include consideration for resilience to natural hazards.

Outstanding Transportation-Related Needs:

- Well before Typhoon Merbok, a January 2009 USACE report concluded that all barge landings in coastal Alaska needed upgrades. Repairing and improvement barge landings will improve communities' food security, fuel delivery, and ability to recover from after future disasters. Runways, roads, trail markers, boardwalks, and bridges require upgrades.

Possible Funding Sources

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-Saving Transportation (PROTECT): The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) established the PROTECT Program to help make surface transportation more resilient to natural hazards, including climate change, sea level rise, flooding, extreme weather events, and other natural disasters through support of planning activities; resilience improvements; community resilience and evacuation routes; and at-risk coastal infrastructure improvements.

Denali Commission Transportation Program: The program includes two major components (1) the roads portion of the program targets the planning, design, and construction of basic road improvements; and (2) the waterfront portion of the program addresses planning, design, and construction of port, harbor, and other rural waterfront needs. Eligible project types include, but are not limited to, regional ports, barge landings and docking facilities.

BIA Tribal Transportation Program: BIA, together with its partners at the FHWA, oversees planning, design, construction, and reconstruction of eligible transportation facilities through the Tribal Transportation Program. The BIA alone oversees the BIA Road Maintenance Program for the maintenance of BIA transportation facilities.

USDA NRCS Watershed Protection Programs: These programs can be used for restoring streambanks, restoring watershed habitat, restoring or decommissioning dams, and installing flood control measures. In Alaska, this program has been used to restore boardwalks and move homes that threaten wildlife habitat and/or bodies of water.

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) FY2023 Community Development Block Grant Program for Indian Tribes and Alaska Native Villages: Projects funded with Imminent Threat grant funds can address issues that have an immediate negative impact on public health or safety of tribal residents. Awards are made through a non-competitive process. Uses include repairing barge landings, repairing sewers, and moving threatened homes.

Economic Development Administration (EDA) Disaster Supplemental: Grant funding to address economic challenges in areas where a Presidential declaration of a major disaster was issued for disasters in 2021 and 2022.

USACE Continuing Authorities Program (CAP) Small Beach Erosion Control: Provides protection or restoration of public shorelines by construction of revetments and jetties.

Outstanding Energy Infrastructure-Related Needs

- Hazards including flooding and erosion caused and exacerbated energy infrastructure challenges in the communities surveyed. Identified projects include elevating the powerplant in Golovin, purchasing generators in Hooper Bay, relocating old energy infrastructure in flood-prone areas in Koyuk, and protective fencing for fuel storage tanks in St. Michael.

Possible Funding Sources

USDA Community Facilities Programs: Offers direct loans, loan guarantees and grants to develop or improve essential public services and facilities in communities across rural America.

Denali Commission: Solicits applications for rural infrastructure projects and workforce/economic development programs. § PA Public Assistance Grant Program - Provides supplemental grants to state, tribal, territorial, and local governments, and certain types of private non-profits so communities can quickly respond to and recover from major disasters or emergencies.

BIA Tribal Electrification Program: For (1) the provision of electricity to unelectrified Tribal homes through zero-emissions energy systems; (2) transitioning electrified Tribal homes to zero emissions energy systems; and (3) associated home repairs and retrofitting necessary to install the zero-emissions energy systems

Table 69. All Mitigation Projects Identified by the IRC in 13 Communities

Location	Mitigation Project Subcategory	Project Description	Cost Estimate	Project Status - Funding Source	Remaining Unmet Need
Bering Strait REAA: Gambell	Emergency Management	Construct evacuation route and shelter on higher ground	\$ 20,000,000	EPA CCERTA awarded. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 20,000,000
Bering Strait REAA: Gambell	Recovery Capacity	Purchase heavy equipment and materials for mitigation work.	\$ 20,000,000	Ongoing - EPA CCERTA. Total cost of project remains. Note: This is generally not an eligible use of CDBG-DR funds.	\$ 20,000,000
Bering Strait REAA: Gambell	Flood and Erosion Control	ADOT storm surge protection for the runway	\$ 1,000,000	Unknown funding status. Assume funding by ADOT.	\$ 0
Bering Strait REAA: Gambell	Flood and Erosion Control	Mitigate storm surge and flooding - new seawall	\$ 10,000,000	EPA CCERTA, BRIC DTA awarded. Total cost of the project remains.	\$ 10,000,000
Bering Strait REAA: Golovin	Emergency Management	Design and construction of emergency shelter.	\$ 10,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 10,000,000
	Energy Infrastructure	Propose relocating and protecting power plant.	\$ 1,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 1,000,000
Bering Strait REAA: Golovin	Energy Infrastructure	Power plant elevation	\$ 1,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 1,000,000
Bering Strait REAA: Golovin	Housing Recovery	Elevating homes in the floodplain area	\$ 10,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 10,000,000
Bering Strait REAA: Golovin	Flood and Erosion Control	Strengthening shoreline against erosion	\$ 10,000,000	BRIC DTA awarded. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 10,000,000
Bering Strait REAA: Koyuk	Energy Infrastructure	Relocate certain power poles	\$ 1,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 1,000,000
Bering Strait REAA: Koyuk	Housing Recovery	Relocation of 20 homes threatened by erosion and flooding	\$ 10,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 10,000,000
Bering Strait REAA: Koyuk	Transportation Infrastructure	Propose airport expansion with erosion protection measures	\$ 1,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 1,000,000
Bering Strait REAA: Koyuk	Transportation Infrastructure	Relocate marine fuel header	\$ 1,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 1,000,000
Bering Strait REAA: Koyuk	Transportation Infrastructure	Repair/relocate barge access road	\$ 1,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 1,000,000

Location	Mitigation Project Subcategory	Project Description	Cost Estimate	Project Status - Funding Source	Remaining Unmet Need
Bering Strait REAA: Koyuk	Recovery Capacity	Propose funding for heavy equipment	\$ 10,000,000	ARPA funding awarded. Amount unknown. Funding gaps remain. Note: This is generally not an eligible use of CDBG-DR funding.	\$ 0
Bering Strait REAA: St. Michael	Housing Recovery	Repair/Relocate homes impacted by erosion	\$ 10,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 10,000,000
Bering Strait REAA: St. Michael	Flood and Erosion Control	Applied for USACE funding for shoreline erosion-related project and was not selected.	\$ 10,000,000	ANTHC is conducting a Permafrost Assessment. Other funding not identified.	\$ 10,000,000
Bering Strait REAA: St. Michael	Flood and Erosion Control	Fortify cemetery from erosion.	\$ 1,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 1,000,000
Lower Kuskokwim REAA: Kipnuk	Housing Recovery	Home repair, relocation, and elevation	\$ 10,000,000	BIA Disaster Supplemental, NRCS Emergency Watershed Program awarded. Amount unknown. Funding gaps remain.	\$ 0
Lower Kuskokwim REAA: Kipnuk	Transportation Infrastructure	Propose funding to repair boardwalks, roads, bridges, and barge landing and make it more resilient	\$ 10,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 10,000,000
Lower Kuskokwim REAA: Kipnuk	Flood and Erosion Control	Erosion control needed along 2,000 feet of shoreline: Riprap Riverbank Stabilization Project	\$ 20,000,000	EPA Community Change Grant awarded and canceled (\$20 million). Funding status unknown as of May 2025.	\$ 0
Lower Kuskokwim REAA: Kwigillingok	Emergency Management	Evacuation routes needed	\$ 10,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 10,000,000
Lower Kuskokwim REAA: Kwigillingok	Housing Recovery	Housing relocation and protect in place measures	\$ 10,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 10,000,000
Lower Kuskokwim REAA: Kwigillingok	Transportation Infrastructure	Barge landing relocation	\$ 1,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 1,000,000
Lower Kuskokwim REAA: Kwigillingok	Recovery Capacity	Heavy equipment, including a front-end loader, needed for elevating homes	\$ 10,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 10,000,000

Location	Mitigation Project Subcategory	Project Description	Cost Estimate	Project Status - Funding Source	Remaining Unmet Need
Lower Kuskokwim REAA: Kwigillingok	Flood and Erosion Control	General erosion control	\$ 10,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 10,000,000
Lower Kuskokwim REAA: Kwigillingok	Water and Sewer Systems	Sewer lagoon upgrades	\$ 1,000,000	ANTHC is assisting. Funding status unknown.	\$ 0
Lower Kuskokwim REAA: Nightmute	Housing Recovery	Home relocations	\$ 10,000,000	BIA TCR awarded (\$150,000). Funding gaps remain.	\$ 9,850,000
Lower Kuskokwim REAA: Nightmute	Transportation Infrastructure	Barge landing repair and improvement to protect against erosion	\$ 1,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 1,000,000
Lower Kuskokwim REAA: Nightmute	Recovery Capacity	Identify funding for heavy equipment including a mini excavator	\$ 10,000,000	Funding identified. Amount unknown.	\$ 0
Lower Kuskokwim REAA: Nightmute	Flood and Erosion Control	Erosion and landslide mitigation along the hillside behind the church	\$ 10,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 10,000,000
Lower Yukon REAA: Hooper Bay	Emergency Management	Propose evacuation shelter	\$ 10,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 10,000,000
Lower Yukon REAA: Hooper Bay	Energy Infrastructure	Assessment and improvement of the power generation infrastructure	\$ 10,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 10,000,000
Lower Yukon REAA: Hooper Bay	Flood and Erosion Control	Erosion control needed due to ground failure/permafrost degradation. Idea proposed to develop a regional seawall with Chevak and Scammon Bay.	\$ 10,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 10,000,000
Lower Yukon REAA: Hooper Bay	Water and Sewer Systems	Long-term solution to failing sewage lagoon	\$ 1,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 1,000,000
Lower Yukon REAA: Nunam Iqua	Flood and Erosion Control	Applied for USACE funding for erosion-related project (dock) and was not selected.	\$ 10,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 10,000,000

Location	Mitigation Project Subcategory	Project Description	Cost Estimate	Project Status - Funding Source	Remaining Unmet Need
Lower Yukon REAA: Scammon Bay	Energy Infrastructure	Identify opportunities for flooding protection of the power plant, such as revetment	\$ 1,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 1,000,000
Lower Yukon REAA: Scammon Bay	Housing Recovery	Mitigate flooding of low-lying homes	\$ 10,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 10,000,000
Lower Yukon REAA: Scammon Bay	Transportation Infrastructure	Propose expanding the barge landing which has eroded and subsided due to permafrost failure.	\$ 1,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 1,000,000
Lower Yukon REAA: Scammon Bay	Transportation Infrastructure	Airport elevation and relocation	\$ 1,000,000	AKDOT&PF is raising and relocating the runway. No remaining unmet need.	\$ 0
Lower Yukon REAA: Scammon Bay	Recovery Capacity	Secure heavy equipment to self-perform recovery projects and repairs (dump truck, rock truck, bulldozer, large excavator, front end loader).	\$ 10,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 10,000,000
Lower Yukon REAA: Scammon Bay	Flood and Erosion Control	Barrier wall enhancement.	\$ 10,000,000	Funding not identified. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 10,000,000
Kashunamiut REAA: Chevak	Housing Recovery	Foundation stabilization, home repairs, weatherization	\$ 10,000,000	BIA Disaster Supplemental awarded. Unknown funding gap remains.	\$ 0
Kashunamiut REAA: Chevak	Transportation Infrastructure	Barge landing relocation	\$ 1,000,000	DOT grant application in process. Total cost of project remains.	\$ 1,000,000
Kashunamiut REAA: Chevak	Flood and Erosion Control	Riverbank erosion mitigation	\$ 15,000,000	USACE 165a awarded (\$15 million). No remaining unmet need.	\$ 0
Total Estimated Project Cost			\$ 341,000,000	Total Estimated Remaining Unmet Need	\$ 262,850,000

2.7.9 Conclusion

As this Mitigation Needs Assessment makes clear, the remaining unmet need for mitigation far exceeds the funding available through CDBG-DR. There are at least eleven natural hazards that pose considerable risk to the most impacted and distressed (MID) areas by 2023 Typhoon Merbok. However, flooding, erosion, permafrost degradation, land subsidence, and severe weather are the most frequent and highest risks present throughout the impacted areas. Alaska is unique in the U.S. because of how permafrost interacts with flooding and erosion to exacerbate the impacts of these hazards. Frozen ground can disintegrate under the compounding influences of permafrost thaw, flooding, and erosion in an escalating feedback loop that can result in damage that is much greater than would be expected from the individual processes alone (State of Alaska HMP 2023). By characterizing these hazards in terms of their frequency and the area's vulnerability, the State of Alaska and its recovery partners can draw on this needs assessment to identify current and future hazards in their communities and target CDBG-DR funds toward cost-effective solutions to mitigate them over the long term. In addition, this assessment will inform all CDBG-DR programs and activities undertaken as part of this allocation such that, at a minimum, they do not exacerbate hazards but rather serve to lessen their impacts.

15% of the State of Alaska's CDBG-DR allocation has been set aside for mitigation and resiliency activities. For mitigation activities, see the Proposed Use of Funds section which outlines a Western Alaska Flood and Erosion Infrastructure/Mitigation Program. For housing activities, see the Proposed Use of Funds section which outlines eligible activities such as voluntary buyout or relocation. A portion of CDBG-DR funds will also be allocated to planning activities. Many planning and capacity-building activities were identified by the IRC in Merbok-affected communities. The following recommendations address unmet planning and capacity-building needs. See details in the Proposed Use of Funds section.

Recommendation: Fund hazard mitigation planning in jurisdictions with no HMP and in jurisdictions with expired HMPs. Historically, HMPs have been a critical resource for communities and the State of Alaska to understand their hazards and secure funding for implementing mitigation projects. Hazard mitigation plans are an eligible activity under CDBG-DR.

Recommendation: Fund regional organizations (Kawerak and AVCP) to protect assets utilized across jurisdictions through regional hazard mitigation planning activities and planning/capacity-building to develop shovel-ready projects in partnership with communities. Many planning needs were identified by the IRC in their work with a subset of Merbok-impacted communities. These needs include:

- Housing relocation and protect-in-place assessments
- Hazard mitigation plans
- Flood and erosion control assessments
- Geotechnical studies for proposed projects
- Small Community Emergency Response plans
- Food security planning
- Community planning, including for new facilities

Please see a list of plans, in addition to the hazard mitigation plan statuses included in Section 2.7.3, in Appendix 5.7.

Recommendation: Confirm that those jurisdictions that completed HMPs shortly before or after Typhoon Merbok identified infrastructure impacts that may not have been captured during the planning process due to submittal and review timing or were not evident until the following spring. The focus is

on identifying unmet needs and developing projects to be accomplished through CDBG-DR funding. This information can be used to update or amend the plan as needed.

Recommendation: Fund update of the State HMP, to include updates of executive summary data that are community-specific in terms of Community Profiles, Critical Facilities, Hazards (including magnitude and probability), and Mitigation Projects.

Recommendation: Fund DHS&EM reimbursable account to support technical assistance and HMP plan reviews that are funded through other mechanisms/grants.

Recommendation: Other community-identified planning activities that support communities in implementing mitigation and other projects.

3. General Requirements

3.1 Program Administration

3.1.1 Financial Controls and Grant Management

DCRA has established financial management systems that comply with 2 CFR Part 200 Subpart D. These systems include internal controls to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse; procedures for fund drawdowns and reporting through DRGR; and segregation of duties to ensure accountability. Supporting documentation for expenditures will be retained in accordance with federal recordkeeping requirements.

3.1.2 Procurement Policies and Standards

All procurement under this Public Action Plan will comply with 2 CFR 200.317-327 and applicable State of Alaska procurement statutes.

- State of Alaska vs. Subrecipient Roles: As a state grantee, Alaska will follow its own state procurement rules consistent with 2 CFR 200.317, while requiring subrecipients to comply with the federal procurement standards in 2 CFR 200.318-326.

- Independent Cost Estimates: DCRA and subrecipients will prepare independent cost estimates (ICEs) for every procurement above the micro-purchase threshold, including contract modifications or change orders, before solicitation.

- Methods of Procurement: All procurements will use one of the federally authorized methods: micro-purchases, small purchases, sealed bids, competitive proposals, or noncompetitive proposals in accordance with 2 CFR 200.320.

- Competition: Procurements will be conducted with full and open competition. The use of cost-plus-percentage-of-cost contracts is strictly prohibited. Geographic preferences are not permitted, except where expressly allowed by federal law.

- Contract Provisions: All contracts will contain the provisions required by 2 CFR 200.326 and Appendix II, including termination for cause, equal employment opportunity, Davis-Bacon (if applicable), Copeland Anti-Kickback, Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards, Clean Air Act, federal debarment and suspension and Byrd Anti-Lobbying certification.

- Recordkeeping: DCRA and subrecipients will maintain detailed records of each procurement, including the rationale for method of procurement, contractor selection or rejection, basis for contract price, and evidence of compliance with all applicable federal requirements.

- Monitoring DCRA will review procurement files during subrecipient monitoring to verify compliance with competition, cost reasonableness, ICE preparation, and inclusion of federal contract provisions.

3.1.3 Environmental Review

All projects funded under this PAP will comply with HUD's regulations at 24 CFR Part 58. DCRA will act as the Responsible Entity and maintain an Environmental Review Record (ERR) for each project. Funds will not be committed or expended until HUD issues Authority to Use Grant Funds (AUGF).

3.2. Citizen Participation

3.2.1. Outreach and Engagement

The State of Alaska Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development (DCCED) Stakeholder Engagement Plan for the 2022 Typhoon Merbok disaster is based on the requirements outlined in the Federal Register, 88 FR 32046 (FR-6393-N-01, Typhoon Merbok), Thursday, May 18, 2023. The most current version of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan will be shared on the official DCCED website at <https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/dcra/GrantsSection/CDBG-DR-Merbok.aspx>.

This Action Plan has been drafted and released in the interest of expediting recovery funding to address known unmet needs linked to or exacerbated by Typhoon Merbok. The information presented here is based on best currently available data; data gaps and / or limitations uncovered through the process have been identified for further investigation during the stakeholder engagement process. The Stakeholder Engagement Plan commenced in August 2025; it is designed to refine the details of the Action Plan with input from the public. Revisions and updates will be published in Substantial Amendment #1 in 2026.

During the engagement process, the State of Alaska will consult with disaster-affected citizens, Tribal and Indigenous leaders and communities, local governments, public housing authorities, and other affected parties in the surrounding geographic area to ensure consistency of disaster impacts identified in the plan, understand relative urgency of unmet needs and mitigation strategies, and ensure the plan and planning process are comprehensive and representative.

“Alaska Native people have survived and thrived for thousands of years in some of the harshest environments on earth and have a wealth of knowledge about how to adapt to changing environmental conditions. This Indigenous knowledge is key to mitigating environmental threats to infrastructure.”

- ANTHC [Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium] 2024. Unmet Needs of Environmentally Threatened Alaska Native Villages: Assessment and Recommendations.

The State of Alaska will ensure access and equal opportunity to programs for individuals with disabilities and persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP), including making appropriate ADA accommodations and providing translation services where applicable. All planned communications and information gathered through the citizen participation process will be compliant with Title II of the American with Disabilities Act of 1990.

Informational Resources and Outreach Materials

The State of Alaska has developed outreach materials to inform residents and stakeholders of the process, timeline, and requirements associated with the CDBG-DR award. All materials are shared publicly on the State's CDBG-DR website:

- *State of Alaska CDBG-DR Typhoon Merbok Overview Presentation*: This presentation provides an overview of the disaster, the CDBG-DR allocation and purpose, timeline and process to develop the Unmet Needs Assessment and Action Plan, and ways to stay engaged in the process.
- *(Forthcoming) Unmet Needs Assessment Survey*: This survey was designed to collect input on the unmet needs linked to or exacerbated by Typhoon Merbok. The survey is intended to reach residents, businesses, Tribal Nations and organizations, regional service organizations, and government agencies living in or serving MID communities.
- *Other key documents, reports, and resources*: Materials related to the CDBG-DR process, notices, and plans can be found linked on the public website. These materials are refreshed throughout the process.

Stakeholder Engagement

The State of Alaska recognizes that affected stakeholders are the center of and partners in the development and implementation of this plan. Due to the geographic scope of the impacted areas and remoteness of the MID communities, the State of Alaska developed a robust Stakeholder Engagement Plan to define and lay the groundwork for a successful outreach and participation process. This Stakeholder Engagement Plan will be posted on the website here:

<https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/dcra/GrantsSection/CDBG-DR-Merbok.aspx>.

Various opportunities for engagement and input will be provided throughout the stakeholder engagement process. Notification of the input opportunities depends on the type of engagement and varies from direct outreach to broad distribution on social media. Steering Committee members were identified through direct outreach to regional organizations from the impacted region to guide stakeholder engagement planning. A formal nomination process will be developed and implemented to identify regional delegates to attend Regional Meetings. The survey will be more widely distributed and will be promoted via social media, the CDBG-DR website, radio ads, newspaper ads, and other local postings.

The following is a summary of proposed stakeholder engagement activities and events:

Table 70. Summary of proposed stakeholder engagement activities and events

Activity & Brief Description	Proposed Stakeholders	Timeline
Steering Committee To support and amplify stakeholder engagement activity and contribute or identify relevant data needed to complete the unmet needs assessment.	Invited participants from key regional organizations (e.g., housing authorities, Tribal entities, regional service organizations).	July 2025 - September 2026
Unmet Needs Survey To collect input on the unmet needs linked to or exacerbated by Typhoon Merbok, how CDBG-DR funds should be prioritized, and identify obligated / available and disbursed / deployed funding for unmet needs.	The survey is intended to reach residents, businesses, Tribal Nations and organizations, regional service organizations, and government agencies living in or serving MID communities.	September 2025 - March 2026
Community Site Visits To gather input on unmet needs linked to or exacerbated by Typhoon Merbok and ensure comprehensive representation across MID communities.	Site visits will strategically fill gaps in engagement from other activities. Specific number, timing, and communities will be determined during the process.	September 2025 - March 2026
Regional Meetings To deepen understanding of shared and unique needs among MID communities, inform funding allocation priorities, and identify obligated / available and disbursed / deployed funding for unmet needs.	Delegates from each MID community will be selected by that community through a nomination process (to be announced).	November 2025 - April 2026
Regional Events To promote the Typhoon Merbok CDBG-DR planning process, selection of delegates for Regional Meetings, and survey completion among key stakeholders.	Specific events will be identified during the planning process, events that reach multiple MID communities may be prioritized with input from the Steering Committee.	November 2025 - April 2026
Public Hearings To launch the public comment period and take public comments / testimony for the draft Action Plan and / or Substantial Amendment #1.	These public hearings will be open to and promoted among MID communities and intend to reach community members, local entities, Tribal organizations, regional service organizations, and government agencies.	(Tentative) September 2025 (ARP) and September 2026 (SA#1)

The following key State, Tribes, local governments, Federal partners, nongovernmental organizations, and the private sector have been invited to support and amplify the stakeholder engagement process by serving on the Steering Committee:

- Alaska Housing Finance Corporation
- Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium
- Aleutian Housing Authority
- Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association

- Association of Village Council Presidents
- Association of Village Council Presidents Regional Housing Authority
- Bering Strait Regional Housing Authority
- City of Saint Paul
- Kawerak, Inc.
- Stebbins Housing Authority
- Unalakleet Housing Authority

Public Comment Period

In addition to the activities above and before the State of Alaska adopts the Action Plan and Substantial Amendment, the State of Alaska has published this action plan on <https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/dcra/GrantsSection/CDBG-DR-Merbok.aspx> for a 30-day public comment period. Access to the public review draft was posted on the project website and promoted through public and local channels via the Steering Committee’s input and in accordance with requirements outlined in the Federal Register. Notice was distributed among affected communities via email, social media, newspaper and radio advertisements, and through local and regional service organizations.

The State of Alaska ensures that all citizens have equal access to information, including persons with disabilities (vision and hearing impaired) and limited English proficiency (LEP). Translations of key documents will be published in English, Inupiaq, Yupik, Cup’ig, and Aleut; published materials will meet 508 compliance standards.

DCCED will take comments via mail, email, fax, or through the DCCED’s project website:

Brandon McNaughton

Division of Community and Regional Affairs
Department of Commerce, Community, and
Economic Development

Location: Anchorage

Phone: (907) 269-4501

Fax: (907) 269-4563

Email: brandon.mcnaughton@alaska.gov

Anita Baker

Division of Community and Regional Affairs
Department of Commerce, Community, and
Economic Development

Location: Anchorage

Phone: (907) 269-4252

Fax: (907) 269-4563

Email: anita.baker@alaska.gov

A summary of citizen comments on this action plan, along with the State of Alaska’s responses, will be included in the appendices and submitted to HUD with the Action Plan and Substantial Amendment.

3.2.2. Public Hearings

Public meetings to hear comments and testimony related to the draft Action Plan and Substantial Amendment #1 are planned for September 2025 and September 2026, respectively. Notification regarding the public meeting details will be distributed via the following methods, with input and refinement from Steering Committee members:

- Social media posts
- Newspapers
- Radio ads

- Local announcement boards in communities

The public hearing will include a basic overview of the CDBG-DR process and summary of comments collected. The location and format of the hearings will be confirmed with Steering Committee input and prioritize equal access, including for persons with disabilities and limited English proficiency (LEP).

Comments and input gathered during the public hearings will be incorporated into the draft before submitting it to HUD. A summary of comments, along with the State of Alaska's responses, will be included in the appendices and submitted to HUD with the Action Plan and Substantial Amendment #1.

3.2.3. Complaints

Complaints alleging violation of fair housing laws will be directed to HUD for immediate review. All fair housing complaints should be submitted through www.hud.gov/fairhousing/fileacomplaint. Complaints regarding fraud, waste, or abuse of funds will be forwarded to the HUD OIG Fraud Hotline (phone: 1-800-347-3735 or email: hotline@hudoig.gov). The State of Alaska will make available to HUD detailed Fraud, Waste, and Abuse Policies and Procedures on <https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/dcra/GrantsSection/CDBG-DR-Merbok.aspx> to demonstrate adequate procedures are in place to prevent fraud, waste, and abuse.

Complaints may be filed at: <https://ak-ombuds.i-sight.com/portal> or can be submitted via mail, email, or telephone:

Alaska Ombudsman
1500 West Benson Blvd.
Anchorage, AK 99503
Email: ombudsman@akleg.gov
Phone: (907) 269-5290

3.3. Public Website

The State of Alaska will maintain a public website that provides information accounting for how all grant funds are used, managed, and administered, including links to all disaster recovery action plans, action plan amendments, program policies and procedures, performance reports, citizen participation requirements, and activity and program information described in this plan, and details of all contracts and ongoing procurement processes.

These items are made available through <https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/dcra/GrantsSection/CDBG-DR-Merbok.aspx>. Specifically, DCCED/DCRA will make the following items available: the action plan created using DRGR (including all amendments); each QPR (as created using the DRGR system); citizen participation plan; procurement policies and procedures; all executed contracts that will be paid with CDBG-DR funds as defined in 2 CFR 200.22 (including subrecipients' contracts); and a summary including the description and status of services or goods currently being procured by the grantee or the subrecipient (e.g., phase of the procurement, requirements for proposals, etc.). Contracts and procurement actions that do not exceed

the micro-purchase threshold, as defined in 2 CFR 200.67, are not required to be posted to a grantee's website.

In addition, the State of Alaska will maintain a comprehensive website regarding all disaster recovery activities assisted with these funds.

The website will be updated in a timely manner to reflect the most up-to-date information about the use of funds and any changes in policies and procedures, as necessary. At a minimum, updates will be made monthly.

3.4. Amendments

Over time, recovery needs will change. The State of Alaska will amend the disaster recovery action plan as often as necessary to best address our long-term recovery needs and goals. This plan describes proposed programs and activities. As programs and activities develop over time, an amendment may not be triggered if the program or activity is consistent with the descriptions provided in this plan. Programs subject to change based on citizen engagement feedback.

3.4.1. Substantial Amendment

A change to this action plan is considered to be a substantial amendment if it meets the following criteria:

- A change in program benefit or eligibility criteria,
- The addition or deletion of an activity, or
- The allocation or reallocation of \$3,849,300 or 10% of the allocation.

When the State of Alaska pursues the substantial amendment process, the amendment will be posted here at <https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/dcra/GrantsSection/CDBG-DR-Merbok.aspx> for a 30-day public comment period. The amendment will be posted in adherence with ADA and LEP requirements. The State of Alaska will review and respond to all public comments received and submit to HUD for approval.

3.4.2. Non-substantial Amendment

A non-substantial amendment is an amendment to the plan that includes technical corrections and clarifications and budget changes that do not meet the monetary threshold for substantial amendments to the plan and does not require posting for public comment. The State of Alaska will notify HUD five (5) business days before the change is effective.

All amendments will be numbered sequentially and posted to the website into one final, consolidated plan.

3.5. Displacement of Person and Other Entities

To minimize the displacement of persons and other entities that may be affected by the activities outlined in this action plan, the State of Alaska will coordinate with the Alaska Housing Finance

Corporation, the Aleutian Housing Authority, the Bering Straits Housing Authority, and the Association of Village Council Presidents Regional Housing Authority to minimize displacement. Should any proposed projects or activities cause the displacement of people, the following policy has been adopted to ensure the requirements of Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act of 1970 (URA), as amended are met.

DCCED will make every effort to minimize temporary and permanent displacement of persons due to the delivery of HUD's CDBG-DR program it administers. DCCED will continue to minimize adverse impacts on persons of low-and-moderate income resulting from acquisition, rehabilitation, and/or demolition activities assisted with funds provided under Title 1 of the Housing and Community Development (HCD) of 1974, as amended, as described in 24 CFR 570.606 (b-g).

The State will ensure that the relocation needs of people with disabilities are addressed in accordance with the Uniform Relocation Act (URA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Relocation assistance will include accessible replacement housing options, reasonable accommodations during the relocation process, and individualized advisory services to ensure that persons with disabilities are not displaced into housing that does not meet their accessibility needs. The State will work with housing providers, service agencies, and advocacy organizations to identify appropriate units and ensure that relocation assistance is responsive to both physical and supportive service needs.

Furthermore, DCCED, may provide comprehensive training to its subrecipients to adopt the State's Residential Anti-Displacement and Relocation Assistance plan (RARAP), which complies with the Uniform Relocation Assistance (URA) and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended, (42 U.S.C. 4601 et seq.), for any household, regardless of income, which is involuntarily and permanently displaced. DCCED has developed a RARAP specifically to govern its CDBG-DR activities. This document is posted on the State's CDBG-DR website at <https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/dcra/GrantsSection/CDBG-DR-Merbok.aspx>.

The URA, is a federal law that establishes minimum standards for federally funded programs and projects, which require the acquisition of real property (real estate) or displace persons from their homes and businesses. The URA's protections and assistance apply to the acquisition, rehabilitation, or demolition of real property for federal or federally funded projects.

- 49 CFR Part 24 is the government-wide regulation that implements the URA.
- HUD Handbook 1378 provides HUD policy and guidance on implementing the URA and 49 CFR Part 24 for HUD funded programs and projects.

As part of condition of compliance with programs subject to URA, DCCED will:

- Provide uniform, fair, and equitable treatment of people whose real property is acquired or who are displaced in connection with federally funded projects as well.
- To ensure relocation assistance is provided to displaced persons to lessen the emotional and financial impact of displacement.
- To ensure that no individual or family is displaced unless decent, safe, and sanitary (DSS) housing is available within the displaced person's financial means.
- To help improve the housing conditions of displaced persons living in substandard housing.
- To encourage and expedite acquisition by agreement and without coercion.

DCCED’s Housing Recovery Program can be used to fund voluntary buyout or rehabilitation. In communities that participate in the National Flood Insurance Program, these funds may be used to elevate the structure. More detail on these eligible uses are found in the Proposed Use of Funds Section.

3.6. Protection of People and Property

DCCED has worked closely with Department of Military and Veterans Affairs/Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Management (DMVA/DHS & EM) on the development and maintenance of the State of Alaska Hazard Mitigation Plan 2023.

DCCED has encouraged the CDBG-DR eligible REAAs to restrict new development/re-development in Areas of Mitigation Interest/Natural Hazards.

The State of Alaska encourages disaster preparedness activities. Therefore, each household will be provided with handouts on Disaster Preparedness and Disaster Supply Kits as recommended on from the State of Alaska Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Management website: www.ak-prepared.com and Federal Emergency Management Agency website: www.ready.gov.

The State of Alaska/DCCED is in the process of creating a new Residential Anti-displacement and Relocation Assistance Plan (RARAP), which outlines how it will minimize displacement and provide relocation assistance, for the CDBG-DR, in accordance with III.C.1.f. and IV.F.7. of the Consolidated Notice. The State of Alaska/DCCED does not anticipate that any activities in this Action Plan will cause displacement.

3.6.1. Elevation Standards

For new construction, repair of substantially damaged, or substantial improvement structures principally for residential use and located in the 1 percent annual (or 100-year) floodplain must be elevated with the lowest flood, including the basement, at least two feet above the 1 percent annual floodplain elevation.

Mixed-use structures with no dwelling units and no residents below two feet above base flood elevation must be elevated or floodproofed up to at least two feet above base flood elevation.

All Critical Actions, as defined at 24 CFR 55.2(b)(3), within the 500-year (or 0.2 percent annual chance) floodplain must be elevated or floodproofed (in accordance with FEMA floodproofing standards at 44 CFR 60.3(c)(2)–(3) or successor standard) to the higher of the 500-year floodplain elevation or three feet above the 100-year floodplain elevation. If the 500-year floodplain is unavailable, and the Critical Action is in the 100-year floodplain, then the structure must be elevated or floodproofed (in accordance with FEMA floodproofing standards at 44 CFR 60.3(c)(2)–(3) or successor standard) at least three feet above the 100-year floodplain elevation. Critical Actions are defined as “any activity for which even a slight chance of flooding would be too great, because such flooding might result in loss of life, injury to persons or damage to property.” For example, Critical Actions include hospitals, nursing homes, emergency shelters, police stations, fire stations, and principal utility lines.

All CDBG-DR funded infrastructure projects will comply with elevation standards per Consolidate Notice II.C.2: nonresidential structures elevated or floodproofed two feet above the 100-year floodplain; critical

actions elevated or floodproofed to the higher of the 500-year floodplain elevation or three feet above the 100-year floodplain. These standards align with FEMA floodproofing regulations (44 CFR 60.3) and HUD's FFRMS requirements.

Unfortunately, many MID communities affected by Typhoon Merbok lack current floodplain mapping to establish a 100-year floodplain, meaning there is no standard established to which to build. Additionally, the lack of mapping precludes joining the NFIP program. This data gap creates cascading effects upon communities who cannot adequately mitigate against flooding or access federal flood insurance and recovery programs. For many communities, the highest benchmark will be the historical flood of record within that community.

3.6.2. Flood Insurance Requirements

Assisted property owners must comply with all flood insurance requirements. HUD-assisted homeowners for a property located in a Special Flood Hazard Area must obtain and maintain flood insurance in the amount and duration prescribed by FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The State of Alaska may not provide disaster assistance for the repair, replacement or restoration of a property to a household with over 120% AMI who has received Federal flood disaster assistance that was conditioned on obtaining flood insurance and then that person failed to obtain or allowed their flood insurance to lapse for the property. The State of Alaska is prohibited by HUD from providing CDBG-DR assistance for the rehabilitation or reconstruction of a house if:

- The combined household income is greater than 120% AMI or the national median,
- The property was located in a floodplain at the time of the disaster, and
- The property owner did not maintain flood insurance on the damaged property.

To ensure adequate recovery resources are available to LMI homeowners who reside in a floodplain but who are unlikely to be able to afford flood insurance may receive CDBG-DR assistance if:

- The homeowner had flood insurance at the time of the qualifying disaster and still has unmet recovery needs, or
- The household earns less than 120% AMI or the national median and has unmet recovery needs.

Of the MID communities affected by Typhoon Merbok, only 4 participate in the NFIP:

- Bethel
- Emmonak
- Nome
- Shishmaref

While affected property owners in these 4 communities are capable of complying with HUD NFIP requirements, all other affected property owners are incapable of complying simply because their communities do not participate in the program.

“Another major obstacle is the lack of participation in the NFIP. In Alaska, many jurisdictions are ineligible to join the NFIP due to their inability to adopt and enforce a flood damage prevention ordinance. The 2022 Alaska Mapping Business Plan notes that the inability of many jurisdictions to adopt and enforce flood damage prevention ordinances is of concern because most of Alaska's federally

declared disasters involving flood or severe storm events have occurred in the Unorganized Boroughs within the Bethel, Kusilvak, and Yukon-Koyukuk census areas, where there are no residential building codes or flood damage prevention ordinances. Within these three census areas, only 9 of the 87 Alaska Native villages participate in the NFIP. More than half of the villages within these census areas are ineligible to participate in the NFIP. Similar to the lack of I-code adoption, one solution to overcoming the lack of code adoption would be to have greater public outreach around the importance of the NFIP.” (State of Alaska HMP 2023, p. 5-24).

3.6.3. Construction Standards

The State of Alaska has adopted several international building codes with amendments to meet Alaska-specific needs, as noted above. Jurisdictions within the Planning Area may have their own building regulations and permitting processes.

Alaska Housing Finance Corporation adopts the IRC for its residential standard and the IECC for its Building Energy Efficiency Standard. However, if a residential building is built outside of a jurisdiction with a residential code and without financing, it may not be built to meet the basic requirements of the IRC. In addition to lack of code adoption, there is limited code enforcement in Alaska. Many rural Alaskan communities lack the personnel and technical experience to carry out code enforcement responsibilities. One solution to overcoming the lack of code adoption would be to have greater public outreach around the importance of the IRC and IECC.” (State of Alaska HMP, 2023, p. 5-24).

For example: “...most of Alaska’s federally declared disasters involving flood or severe storm events have occurred in the Unorganized Boroughs within the Bethel, Kusilvak, and Yukon-Koyukuk census areas, where there are no residential building codes or flood damage prevention ordinance” (State of Alaska HMP, 2023, p. 5-24).

In accordance with Alaska Statute (AS) 18.56.300, residential housing constructed on or after July 1, 1992, must undergo an approved inspection process to be eligible for financing by Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC). Only an authorized inspector may perform the required inspections. The purpose of the inspection is to provide oversight and to ensure compliance with current adopted building codes. All inspections are based on the 2018 International Residential Code (IRC) with AHFC amendments established by AS 18.56.300; inspection for structures with 4 dwellings must also meet the provisions set forth in 13 AAC 50.020 Building Code (AHFC 2020). According to the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC), Nome is the only Municipality in the Planning Area complying with AS 18.56.300 (AHFC 2018).

The State of Alaska will require quality inspections and code compliance inspections on all projects and places an emphasis on high-quality, durable, sustainable, and energy efficient construction methods and materials. Site inspections will be required on all projects to ensure quality and compliance with building codes.

All rehabilitation, reconstruction, or new construction must meet an industry-recognized standard that has achieved certification under at least one of the following programs:

- Energy STAR (Certified Homes or Multifamily High Risk)
- Enterprise Green Communities

- LEED (New Construction, Homes, Midrise, Existing Building Operations and Maintenance or Neighborhood Development)
- ICC- 700 National Green Building Standards
- EPA Indoor AirPlus
- Any other equivalent comprehensive green building standard program acceptable to HUD

The State of Alaska will use Energy STAR for the proposed programs or activities.

In addition to the above standards, the State of Alaska will encourage communities in the planning area to incorporate research and recommendations from the Cold Climate Housing Research Center, where reasonable and cost-effective, to improve housing resilience to the extremes of the Alaskan climate.

For rehabilitation of non-substantially damaged residential buildings, the State of Alaska will follow the guidelines to the extent applicable as specified in the HUD CPD Green Building Retrofit Checklist.⁶ When older or obsolete products are replaced as part of rehabilitation work, the rehabilitation is required to use ENERGY STAR-labeled, WaterSense-labeled, or Federal Energy Management Program (FEMP)-designed products and appliances.

The definition of substantial damage is defined in [44 CFR 59.1](#)⁷ and applies to any reconstruction, rehabilitation, addition or other improvement to a structure, the total cost of which equals or exceeds 50% of the market value of the structure before the start of construction of the improvement.

The State of Alaska will utilize the [UFAS Accessibility Checklist](#) as a minimum standard for structures with five or more units to assist in the compliance of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. The checklist will be used when reviewing the design of all newly constructed residential structures (other than privately owned residential structures). The Fair Housing Act (including the seven basic design and construction requirements set forth in the Fair Housing Act) also applies to buildings with four or more units. Titles II and III of the Americans with Disabilities Act also applies to public housing. For infrastructure projects, the State of Alaska will encourage, to the extent practicable, implementation of green infrastructure design and implementation, such as those issued by:

- U.S. EPA through their Green Infrastructure Design and Implementation guidance.
- HUD through their Green Infrastructure and Sustainable Communities Initiative.

All projects will be subject to cost reasonableness standards as outlined in the policies and procedures of the applicable program specific to the applicable activity. Industry standard cost-estimating software will be used to compare scopes of work and actual construction cost against location-specific indexes informed by historical construction costs for a given region.

To ensure energy efficiency in all new construction, reconstruction, and replacement activities, the State of Alaska will apply the Residential Building Energy Efficiency Standards (BEES). Developed by the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation, this standard combines and amends the IECC 2018 and ASHRAE 62.2 2016 (American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers standard on ventilation for acceptable indoor air quality in low-rise residential buildings).

⁶ HUD CPD Green Building Retrofit Checklist: <https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/3684/guidance-on-the-cpd-green-building-checklist/>

⁷ Available at: <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-44/chapter-I/subchapter-B/part-59>. Accessed August 25, 2025.

The following building codes are adopted by the State of Alaska:

- 2021 International Building Code (IBC),
- 2021 International Existing Building Code (IEBC),
- 2018 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC),
- 2021 International Fire Code (IFC),
- 2021 International Fuel Gas Code (IFGC),
- 2021 International Mechanical Code (IMC), and
- 2018 International Residential Code (IRC).

Title 13 of the Alaska Administrative Code, Chapters 50 through 55, along with the above codes, make up Alaska State Building Code. The additional legislation in the administrative code creates Alaska specific amendments to account for the extreme climate of and the feasibility of construction techniques within the State of Alaska. Some boroughs may implement their own building codes, but the state code is the primary standard within the unorganized borough.

Because of the extremes of the Alaskan climate, building codes and practice must be tailored to meet the specific needs of the region. The Cold Climate Housing Research Center is a non-profit conducting practical research into advancing construction techniques in Alaska to better protect Alaskans and their homes. Where reasonable and cost-effective, the State of Alaska will encourage communities to incorporate CCHRC guidance in their design and procurement processes.

3.6.4. Contractor Standards

Construction of any kind is difficult throughout Alaska, even more so in remote villages disconnected from the road system. Selecting contractors capable of performing work in the region up to the standards required by the climate is of the utmost importance. The State of Alaska will work with and encourage MID communities to develop detailed RFPs, containing minimum requirements for the following:

- Licensed in the State of Alaska to do business
- Holds active professional licenses and insurance
- Able to post a bond for proposed construction
- Proven track record of similar construction in Western Alaska
- Can provide relevant and recent customer references for previous work similar to the proposed construction

Each community will have the ability to adjust their RFP to fit the needs of the community and specific hazards faced, but the State of Alaska recommends that each community works with an entity such as the Associated General Contractors of Alaska to tailor and disseminate these RFPs.

Each project will include an express warranty of 1 year from the completion of construction. Beneficiaries will be notified 6 months after construction, and 2 months before the end of the warranty period. This will allow beneficiaries the necessary time to gather evidence to dispute any defects in materials or workmanship of construction. These warranty notifications must be disseminated in a number of forms to ensure that every beneficiary is reached and knows their rights as a warranty holder.

The State of Alaska will require selected contractors to develop a warranty dispute process, which will take into consideration potential difficulties in the rural MIDs. These difficulties may include: language barriers and the need for document translation, multiple avenues for making a warranty complaint where communication utilities are unreliable, the demands of subsistence lifestyles and important cultural events throughout the year, etc. To ensure that contractors are held responsible for any failings in materials or workmanship, MID communities should be involved directly in this process on behalf of beneficiaries.

Contractors selected under the State of Alaska will make every effort to provide opportunities to low and very low income persons by providing resources and information to notify Section 3 individuals and businesses of opportunities in the community. Grantees may elaborate on specific steps to promote Section 3. The State of Alaska will report Section 3 accomplishments in the Disaster Recovery Grant Reporting (DRGR) system.

3.6.5. Preparedness, Mitigation, and Resiliency

Resilience refers to a community's ability to minimize damage and recover quickly from extreme events and changing conditions, including natural hazard risks. The State of Alaska defines community resilience as the ability to prepare for anticipated hazards, adapt to changing conditions, and withstand and recover from disruptions. Activities, such as disaster preparedness - which includes prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery - are key steps to resilience. DHS&EM Resilience Section identifies the following core elements of Resilience:

- Local Knowledge
- Community networks and relationships
- Communication
- Health
- Governance and leadership
- Resources
- Economic investment
- Preparedness
- Mental outlook

The State of Alaska, having completed the statewide HMP in 2023, promotes the adoption of planning programs to increase community capabilities in the face of environmental disasters. The Resilience Section of the DHS&EM highlights the importance of the Small Community Emergency Response Plan (SCERP), Continuity of Operations Plans (COOP), and Hazard Mitigation Plans. Between these three plans, they cover the response, recovery, and mitigation phases of disaster, working in tandem to improve a community's preparedness for and resilience in the face of natural disasters.

The HMP process particularly espouses the spirit of resilience, in tailoring the plan to a community's needs and priorities. It creates the opportunity for communities to integrate, protect, and further their cultural heritage, both a tangible and intangible community asset so important throughout all Native Alaskan Tribes.

Out of the 56 MID communities affected by Typhoon Merbok, 29 have active and approved HMPs. Of those without active plans, 21 communities have completed at least one HMP in the past; 8 of which are currently pursuing plan updates or funding for plan updates; and only 6 have never completed a plan.

In many cases, the HMP serves many outcomes, from providing historical context to the communities and the hazards they face, to identifying data gaps, and charting a path forward for more resilient communities. Many of the active plans in the MID communities include activities like joining the NFIP, constructing new critical facilities built to adhere to the State adopted building codes, and education and outreach to citizens on local hazards and mitigation efforts. Similarly, though these communities may lack a mapped 100-year floodplain, the HMPs contain mitigation activities directing development away from identified mitigatable hazard zones and mapping of historical disasters to provide context for these potential hazard zones. All the information contained within works to support other local planning efforts, such as a Land Use Plan, which can codify and direct future development away from hazard zones first identified in an HMP. Similarly, as the HMP is a record of disasters affecting a community, planning teams can use the plan during post-disaster evaluations to corroborate hypotheses and assumptions to further tailor and inform future community development away from potential hazard zones.

Due to differing local priorities and capacity, as well as the scope of potential mitigation actions, an average cost of mitigation strategies in HMPs is not indicative of cost effectiveness. Many can be accomplished with existing staff and funds, while others require significant investment over many years. However, planning teams must consider each mitigation action for its technical feasibility, benefit vs. cost, and as a priority of local mitigation priorities. The State of Alaska will use this prioritization already completed to compare the proposed mitigation actions against alternative mitigation actions and their relative costs.

Each CDBG-DR program and activity includes measures that will increase resilience to disasters and reduce or eliminate the long-term risk of life, injury, damage to and loss of property, and suffering and hardship by lessening the impact of future disasters. This includes construction activities, public services, and/or planning activities.

3.6.6. Broadband and Infrastructure in Housing

Broadband infrastructure is defined as cables, fiber optics, wiring, or other permanent (integral to the structure) infrastructure that is capable of providing access to Internet connections in individual housing units that meet the definition of “advanced telecommunications capability” determined by the Federal Communications Commission under section 706 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 ⁸ (47 U.S.C. 1302).⁹

⁸ Available at: <https://www.congress.gov/104/plaws/publ104/PLAW-104publ104.htm>. Accessed August 25, 2025.

⁹ Available at: <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/USCODE-2023-title47/pdf/USCODE-2023-title47-chap12-sec1302.pdf>. Accessed August 25, 2025.

Any substantial rehabilitation, as defined by [24 CFR 5.100](#),¹⁰ reconstruction, or new construction of a building with more than four rental units must include installation of broadband infrastructure in each unit, except where the grantee documents that:

- the location of the new construction or substantial rehabilitation makes installation of broadband infrastructure infeasible;
- the cost of installing broadband infrastructure would result in a fundamental alteration in the nature of its program or activity, or in an undue financial burden; or
- the structure of the housing to be substantially rehabilitated makes installation of broadband infrastructure infeasible.

3.6.7. Cost-effectiveness

The State of Alaska will establish policies and procedures to assess the cost-effectiveness of each proposed program or activity to assist a household under any residential rehabilitation or reconstruction program or activity funded with CDBG-DR funds. Policies and procedures also will establish the criteria for determining when the cost of the rehabilitation or reconstruction of the unit will not be cost-effective relative to other means of assisting the property owner.

A demonstrable hardship may be claimed by a program applicant requesting assistance that exceeds program limitations. The Alaska Housing Finance Corporation defines hardship, in their Step program, as:

- The family must have an extraordinary change in life circumstances that significantly impacts the family's income; AND
- The hardship must be of long-term or permanent duration (at least 90 days); AND
- The hardship must cause the family to experience a shelter burden in excess of 50 percent of gross or adjusted monthly income.

Some structures may not be suitable for rehabilitation. This determination may look different in each community depending on local mitigation priorities, mapped hazard zones, and future land use planning. However, the State of Alaska will mandate the following minimum standards for disqualifying a structure from rehabilitation

- The structure has received substantial damage (the cost to repair is 50% or greater than the pre-damage market value)
- The structure is sited within a mapped hazard zone and may be damaged in similar, future disasters, as identified by local land use planning, NFIP, or HMP

The State of Alaska may grant exceptions on a case-by-case basis to the maximum amount of assistance or cost-effective criteria. The State will adopt procedures to ensure fair and standardized application of exceptions for beneficiaries who may require greater accommodations, such as for medical or disability needs.

¹⁰ Available at: <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-24/subtitle-A/part-5/subpart-A/section-5.100>. Accessed August 25, 2025.

3.6.8. Duplication of Benefits

A duplication of benefits occurs when an impacted person, household, business, government, or other entity receives financial assistance from multiple sources such as FEMA, USACE, EDA, insurance, etc. for the same purpose, and the total assistance received for that purpose is more than the total need for assistance.

Section 312 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act,¹¹ as amended, generally prohibits any person, business concern, or other entity from receiving financial assistance with respect to any part of a loss resulting from a major disaster for which such person, business concern, or other entity has received financial assistance under any other program or from insurance or any other source.

To comply with Section 312, the State of Alaska shall ensure that each program and activity provides assistance to a person or entity only to the extent that the person or entity has a disaster recovery need that has not been fully met. DCRA will conduct DOB reviews consistent with the Consolidated Notice IV.A. For the 2022 disasters, subsidized loans (including SBA disaster loans) are considered a duplication of benefits. The DRRRA loan exception does not apply. Applicants will be required to sign a subrogation agreement to repay any DOB identified after award.

Typhoon Merbok and its effects upon the communities of Western Alaska became a presidentially declared disaster on August 23rd, 2023, paving the way for public and individual assistance through FEMA. These funding mechanisms provided almost \$12.5 million to affected communities, as well as \$96,000 under the HMGP. This assistance will form the basis of duplication of benefits determination. Additional funding sources will be assessed to ensure there is no duplication of benefits, including:

- FEMA IA
- FEMA Increased Cost of Compliance
- FEMA PA
- SBA Disaster Recovery (Homeowner, Business, EIDL)
- Private insurance
- USACE

¹¹ Available at: <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/COMPS-2977/pdf/COMPS-2977.pdf>. Accessed August 25, 2025.

4. Grantee-proposed Use of Funds

4.1. Overview

The State of Alaska, Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development, Division of Community and Regional Affairs, Grants and Funding Section is the lead agency and responsible entity for administering \$38,493,000 in CDBG-DR funds in response to FEMA Disaster #4672 2022-Typhoon Merbok. These programs include:

- Housing
- Legal Services
- Mitigation/Infrastructure
- Administration
- Resilience Planning

4.2. Program Budget

The allocations below are based on the best currently available data and reflect portions of need to support the programs. Adjustments may be made in future based on feedback from citizen engagement in 2025-2026, and/or once the programs are implemented.

Table 71. Proposed CDBG-DR Budget Allocation for AK-DR-4672 Typhoon Merbok (2022)

Program Category	Program	Budget	HUD-Identified MID Budget	State - Identified MID Budget	Percent of Allocation	Maximum Award	National Objective	Estimated Outcome
Housing	Homeowner Recovery	\$15,423,400	\$12,338,720	\$3,084,680	39%	\$200,000	LMI	77 housing units
	New Construction	\$10,000,000	\$8,000,000	\$2,000,000	25%	\$8,000,000	LMI	15-38 housing units
Public Services	Legal Services	\$350,000	\$280,000	\$70,000	1%	\$10,000	LMI	150 households assisted
Mitigation	Mitigation Infrastructure	\$ 5,021,000	\$4,016,800	\$1,004,200	15%	\$1,000,000	LMI	5-6 projects funded
Administration	Administration	\$ 1,924,650	n/a	n/a	5%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Planning	Planning	\$ 5,773,950	n/a	n/a	15%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total		\$38,493,000	\$24,635,520	\$6,158,880	100.0%			

The State of Alaska CDBG-DR fund allocations aim to ensure resources prioritize the most critical unmet recovery and mitigation needs identified in the Impact and Unmet Needs Assessment and the Mitigation

Needs Assessment. The proposed budget aligns with HUD’s consolidated Notice requirement that allocations be reasonably proportionate to assessed needs or justified otherwise. DCRA has evaluated unmet recovery needs across all sectors based on the best currently available data. Based on this assessment, DCRA has determined that the greatest proportion of CDBG-DR resources must be directed to housing, infrastructure/mitigation, and planning activities, where the scale of unmet need is most significant and where CDBG-DR is uniquely positioned to add value.

4.3. Connection to Unmet Needs

The CDBG-DR funds allocated under [88 FR 32046](#) are not enough to fully address unmet need for recovery and mitigation in the HUD-identified and State-identified MID areas. While the MID areas have significant unmet infrastructure, economic revitalization and public service needs, this action plan focuses on addressing unmet need for housing, mitigation infrastructure and planning. The proposed allocation and use of funds is intended to make the most effective and impactful use of extremely limited funding relative to the need. CDBG-DR funds are proposed to be used to address the substantial pre-disaster unmet need for housing in MID areas (over \$1.9 billion) by supporting elder housing and multi-family low-income housing in hub communities within the MID areas. The proposed new housing construction can serve as interim housing while damaged homes are repaired, remediated or rebuilt, as well as permanent housing to replace homes that were destroyed or damaged beyond repair. CDBG-DR housing funds are also proposed to be used to address some degree of remaining housing recovery, rehabilitation and mitigation by supporting the inspection, repair and/or rebuilding of homes damaged by Typhoon Merbok. Common post-disaster housing needs documented by Interagency Recovery Coordination (IRC) data include home relocations, elevations and leveling, foundation repairs, general home repairs and rebuilding homes that were damaged beyond repair or destroyed. This action plan applies the Mitigation set-aside to flood and erosion-control infrastructure reducing future erosion and flooding risks frequently identified as hazards in the unmet needs assessment. In FEMA’s Recovery Needs Assessment, published in May 2023, Community Planning and Capacity Building represented the category with the third-highest unmet need, behind Erosion and Housing Recovery (FEMA Recovery Needs Assessment, 2023). The proposed use of planning funds prioritizes updating Hazard Mitigation Plans to reduce the number of jurisdictions within the MIDs that do not have current adopted FEMA-approved Hazard Mitigation Plans and other plans and studies supporting disaster recovery and mitigation in the future. Additional unmet needs identified during planned outreach in 2025-2026 (See 3.1 Citizen Participation) may be added through a Substantial Amendment at a later date.

Allocation Requirements

Federal Register 88 FR 32046 (FR-6393-N-01, Typhoon Merbok) requires the allocation of at least 80 percent of funds to address unmet needs in HUD-identified "most impacted and distressed" (MID) areas, and up to 20 percent of the remaining funds in State-identified MID areas. Below is a description of the program budget allocations meeting this requirement.

- **HUD-identified "most impacted and distressed" areas:** A minimum of \$30,794,400 (80% of total CDBG-DR allocation for unmet needs from Public Law 117-328 for FEMA disaster No. 4672) must be allocated to HUD-identified MIDs.

- Bering Straits Regional Education Attendance Area (Nome Census Area): Brevig Mission, Diomedede, Elim, Gambell, Golovin, Koyuk, Nome, Saint Michael, Savoonga, Shishmaref, Stebbins, Teller, Unalakleet, Wales, and Wite Mountain.
- Kashunamiut Regional Education Attendance Area (Kusilvak Census Area): Chevak.
- Lower Yukon Regional Education Attendance Area (Kusilvak Census Area): Alaknuk, Emmonak, Hooper Bay, Kotlik, Marshall, Mountain Village, Nunam Iqua, Pilot Station, Russian Mission, and Scammon Bay.
- **State-identified "most impacted and distressed" areas:** Up to \$7,698,600 (20% of total CDBG-DR allocation for unmet needs from Public Law 117-328 for FEMA disaster No. 4672) may be allocated to State-identified MIDs.
 - Lower Kuskokwim and Yupiit Regional Education Attendance Areas (Bethel Census Area): Akiachak, Akiak, Atmautluak, Bethel, Chefornak, Eek, Goodnews Bay, Kasigluk, Kipnuk, Kwethluk, Kwigillingok, Mekoryuk, Napakiak, Napaskiak, Newtok, Nightmute, Nunapitchuk, Oscarville, Platinum, Quinhagak, Tuluksak, Tuntutuliak, Tununak, and Toksook Bay.
 - Pribilof Islands Regional Education Attendance Area (Aleutians West Census Area): Saint George and Saint Paul.

Mitigation: A minimum of \$5,021,000 must be used for mitigation activities (CDBG-DR mitigation set-aside from Public Law 117-328 for FEMA disaster No. 4672). Infrastructure improvements supporting housing, resiliency planning, and mitigation needs will be prioritized to safeguard against future disasters. Mitigation measures will be incorporated into new construction projects to ensure future resilience. This plan allocates 80 percent of the mitigation set-aside to HUD-identified and 20% to State-identified MID Areas. The Maximum Award for this program is \$1,000,000. Exceptions will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Housing: Typhoon Merbok exacerbated significant pre-disaster unmet housing needs in these MID Areas experiencing some of the highest overcrowding rates in the nation. This plan allocates funds to address unmet needs for housing through a homeowner recovery program and a program to support the construction of new housing meeting a portion of the pre-disaster unmet need giving families whose homes were impacted by Typhoon Merbok a place to relocate. This plan allocates 80 percent of each housing program to the HUD-identified and 20 percent to the State-identified MID Areas. Funding will be sub awarded to the Tribally Designated Housing Entities (TDHE) that serve the MID Areas for the construction of new housing serving LMI and vulnerable populations. The Maximum Award for the Homeowner Recovery Program is \$200,000. The New Housing Construction program includes \$8,000,000 maximum award to the Bering Strait Regional Housing Authority and \$2,000,000 maximum award to the Association of Village Council Presidents Regional Housing Authority. Exceptions will be determined on a case-by-case basis for both programs.

Planning: This budget includes an allocation to the State of Alaska for planning activities. The State may reallocate some or all of the planning allocation to fund eligible planning activities by or for MID communities once program operations are underway. This plan recommends prioritizing assistance to develop or update Hazard Mitigation Plans (HMPs) in the 29 MID communities that do not have a current FEMA-approved locally adopted HMP. This prioritization increases and improves preparedness

for future hazards and potential disasters in these communities, making them eligible for future disaster recovery funding. The State is working to integrate Hazard Mitigation Planning into other community development plans and studies. A substantial amendment to this Public Action Plan will be submitted to HUD should the State of Alaska make this change. Strategic housing plans for the MID areas may also be prioritized. The Maximum Award for this program is \$100,000 per planning activity within the HUD- and Grantee-identified MID Areas, and \$250,000 for a reimbursable support agreement with the State of Alaska Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHS&EM) for Hazard Mitigation Planning Review. Exceptions will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Public Services – Legal Services: This budget allocates \$350,000 toward a Legal Services Program will provide funding to qualified legal aid and/or legal services providers to deliver the assistance necessary to help impacted residents transition to more permanent housing. This plan allocates 80 percent of the mitigation set-aside to HUD-identified and 20% to State-identified MID Areas. The Maximum Award for this program is \$10,000 per household. Exceptions will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

National Objectives

The program budget primarily advances the national objective of Low- to Moderate-Income (LMI).

Low- to Moderate-Income (LMI): To meet the Low- to Moderate-Income objective, at least 70 percent of all program funds will benefit LMI persons or households. CDBG-DR funded projects and activities will be required to meet this threshold.

Other national objectives are to aid in the prevention or elimination of slums or blight (S/B), or to meet an Urgent Need (UN). The Urgent Need objective is met if the program funds meet an urgent community development need because existing conditions pose a serious and immediate threat to the health or welfare of the communities, where other financial resources are unavailable to meet such needs. The Urgent Need national objective will only be used when an LMI national objective cannot be achieved through the project, but the project has demonstrable recovery or mitigation benefits within the most impacted and distressed (MID) areas. Urgent Need has a 36-month limitation, which will occur on May 17, 2026 for this CDBG-DR allocation.

Unmet Needs

This action plan primarily considers and addresses unmet needs for housing and infrastructure to support housing, which were determined to have the highest remaining unmet need through the unmet needs assessment. Economic revitalization is also a significant unmet need in this region; however, housing was determined to have greater urgency at this time.

4.4. Leveraging Funds

The State of Alaska/DCCED anticipates leveraging CDBG-DR funds with other federal, state, local, private and/or nonprofit funding programs to increase its ability to address and mitigate against major disasters. To maximize benefit, the State of Alaska anticipates leveraging CDBG-DR funds with federal funding sources such as FEMA Public Assistance/Individual Assistance/Hazard Mitigation Grant Programs as well as other State and local grant programs that require a match.

The housing program(s) will leverage other funding sources by requiring or providing matching funds for eligible projects. Projects that maximize impact by leveraging other funding sources will be prioritized in the selection and award of funds. Federal funding for housing typically includes HUD CDBG, HUD ICDBG, HUD IHBG, BIA Housing programs, USDA Rural Development, and NAHASDA.

Duplication of Benefits

CDBG-DR funds will be used to address critical unmet needs that remain after all other funding sources have been committed and exhausted to prevent any duplication of benefits. Additional funding sources that are important to document for the purposes of leveraging disaster recovery funds and ensure duplication of benefits (DOB) compliance include: FEMA, Small Business Administration (SBA), and private insurance. Currently available data specific to these sources are provided in the unmet needs assessment included in this plan. Additional funding sources that may constitute a duplication of benefits will be evaluated on a project-specific basis.

4.5. Program Partners

The State of Alaska will actively coordinate and partner with entities serving the MID areas, as appropriate to each program, through subrecipient agreements, interagency agreements and informal partnerships. Program partners include:

- Alaska Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHS&EM), state grantee for FEMA funds.
- Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC), state regulatory body for sanitation (if CDBG-DR funded programs involve water, wastewater or other sanitation infrastructure).
- Army Corps of Engineers, Alaska District
- Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC), which assists with planning and construction of hazard mitigation projects and sanitation infrastructure for communities within the MID areas.
- Cities and Tribal governments within the MID areas.
- Non-profit service organizations, including the Association of Village Council Presidents (AVCP), Kawerak Inc., and the Aleutian and Pribilof Islands Association (APIA).
- The Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC), the State's public housing provider
- Tribally Designated Housing Entities (TDHEs) that serve the MID areas, including the Bering Strait Regional Housing Authority (RHA) and the Association of Village Council Presidents Regional Housing Authority (AVCP RHA).

These partnerships are involved in the development of the public action plan, as well as determining the best form for ongoing engagement (e.g., through subrecipient agreements, MOUs, or ongoing coordination).

When engaging in formal agreements for the administration or implementation of programs, the State of Alaska will perform a pre-award risk assessment on each subrecipient to ensure that subrecipients have the capacity and expertise to carry out the program activities included in their scope of work. All such partners will be selected based on qualifications and documented successful experience in administering or providing specialized services associated with CDBG-DR recovery and compliance.

CDBG-DR grantees (in this case, the State of Alaska) are responsible for ensuring that all housing associated with CDBG-DR funds is made available on a non-discriminatory basis: that is, without regard to race, color, religion, sex, disability, familial status, age or national origin. This responsibility includes monitoring program outcomes on an ongoing basis to identify and eliminate barriers to participation by protected classes, preventing or mitigating unintended discriminatory impacts. Discriminatory housing practices may include any action in which an individual or class of individuals in a specific protected class is treated differently than others who are not in that protected class, when the result of that action denies the individual/class of individuals equal access to or benefit of a housing opportunity.

Monitoring Standards

DCRA will conduct risk-based monitoring of all subrecipients and contractors consistent with 2 CFR 200.332 and HUD's monitoring protocols. Monitoring will include review of:

- Procurement and contract files
- Environmental review records
- Civil rights and fair housing compliance
- DOB determinations and subrogation enforcement
- Financial and performance reports

Monitoring will occur both remotely and on-site. DCRA will document findings and issue corrective actions where necessary. Monitoring results will be included in quarterly performance reports (QPRs) to HUD.

4.6. Distribution of Funds

The distribution of program funds described below are based on the best currently available data. While many Housing, Infrastructure, Mitigation and Planning disaster recovery actions were documented in Interagency Recovery Coordination (IRC) data, the October 2023 Recovery Strategy (Federal/State) DR-4672-AK, October 2023 Recovery Needs Assessment (Federal/State), 2024 ANTHC Unmet Needs of Environmentally Threatened Alaska Native Villages, local and tribal Hazard Mitigation Plans, and/or other sources for the MID areas, this Action Plan focuses on mitigating unmet housing need in the MID areas. The CDBG-DR Mitigation set-aside focuses on flood and erosion control measures in MID areas, as these were the most frequently documented hazard mitigation action. Adjustments may be made in future based on feedback from citizen engagement in 2025-2026 and incorporated into a Substantial Amendment to this Action Plan.

Housing: This plan allocates \$25,773,400, or 67 percent of CDBG-DR funding to eligible subrecipient(s) for new housing construction. At least eighty (80) percent of these funds (\$20,618,720) are to address unmet need in the:

- Bering Straits Regional Education Attendance Area (Nome Census Area): Brevig Mission, Diomed, Elim, Gambell, Golovin, Koyuk, Nome, Saint Michael, Savoonga, Shishmaref, Stebbins, Teller, Unalakleet, Wales, and White Mountain.
- Kashunamiut Regional Education Attendance Area (Kusilvak Census Area): Chevak.

- Lower Yukon Regional Education Attendance Area (Kusilvak Census Area): Alaknuk, Emmonak, Hooper Bay, Kotlik, Marshall, Mountain Village, Nunam Iqua, Pilot Station, Russian Mission, Saint and Scammon Bay.

Up to twenty (20) percent of these funds (\$5,154,680) may address unmet need in the:

- Lower Kuskokwim and Yupiit Regional Education Attendance Areas (Bethel Census Area): Akiachak, Akiak, Atmoutluak, Bethel, Chefornak, Eek, Goodnews Bay, Kasigluk, Kipnuk, Kwethluk, Kwigillingok, Mekoryuk, Napakiak, Napaskiak, Newtok, Nightmute, Nunapitchuk, Oscarville, Platinum, Quinhagak, Tuluksak, Tuntutuliak, Tununak, and Toksook Bay.
- Pribilof Islands Regional Education Attendance Area (Aleutians West Census Area): Saint George and Saint Paul.

Mitigation: This plan allocates the mitigation set-aside of \$5,021,000 of CDBG-DR funding to eligible subrecipient(s) for flood and erosion mitigation measures. At least eighty (80) percent of these funds (\$4,016,800) are to address unmet need in the:

- Bering Straits Regional Education Attendance Area (Nome Census Area): Brevig Mission, Diomede, Elim, Gambell, Golovin, Koyuk, Nome, Saint Michael, Savoonga, Shishmaref, Stebbins, Teller, Unalakleet, Wales, and Wite Mountain.
- Kashunamiut Regional Education Attendance Area (Kusilvak Census Area): Chevak.
- Lower Yukon Regional Education Attendance Area (Kusilvak Census Area): Alaknuk, Emmonak, Hooper Bay, Kotlik, Marshall, Mountain Village, Nunam Iqua, Pilot Station, Russian Mission, Saint and Scammon Bay.

Up to twenty (20) percent of funds (\$1,004,200) may address unmet need in the:

- Lower Kuskokwim and Yupiit Regional Education Attendance Areas (Bethel Census Area): Akiachak, Akiak, Atmoutluak, Bethel, Chefornak, Eek, Goodnews Bay, Kasigluk, Kipnuk, Kwethluk, Kwigillingok, Mekoryuk, Napakiak, Napaskiak, Newtok, Nightmute, Nunapitchuk, Oscarville, Platinum, Quinhagak, Tuluksak, Tuntutuliak, Tununak, and Toksook Bay.
- Pribilof Islands Regional Education Attendance Area (Aleutians West Census Area): Saint George and Saint Paul.

Administration: The State of Alaska will retain the full 5% allocated for administrative costs associated with the CDBG-DR allocation for purposes of oversight, management, and reporting. State administrative costs will not exceed five (5) percent, \$1,924,650. Pursuant to 24 CFR§58.34(a)(3), except for applicable requirements of 24 CFR §58.6, administrative and management activities are exempt activities under this Action Plan. Once contracted, the State of Alaska will allow the drawdown of pre-agreement costs associated with eligible disaster recovery activities dating back to the date of the disaster (September 22, 2022) for subrecipients and the State of Alaska with appropriate documentation.

Planning: The State of Alaska will retain the full 15% allocated for planning associated with the CDBG-DR allocation (\$5,773,950). All planning funds will be used for studies which directly impact the HUD and State-identified MID areas. The Planning Program will provide grant assistance for recovery and mitigation planning to meet the community's recovery and mitigation objectives as informed by the approved local hazard mitigation plans and other local priorities. The program aims to reduce long-term

risk and increase local resilience through planning efforts that identify and prioritize mitigation projects with cost estimates and actions needed to move those projects into implementation.

4.7. Pre-agreement Costs

Section III.F.4 of the Consolidated Notice (Federal Register, 88 FR 32046 (FR-6393-N-01, Typhoon Merbok), Thursday, May 18, 2023) permits a state grantee to reimburse itself, in accordance with 24 CFR 570.489(b), for otherwise allowable costs incurred by the grantee or its subrecipients on or after the incident date of the covered disaster (September 20, 2022) but prior to the execution of a grant agreement with HUD. This includes, but is not limited to, activities supporting program development, action plan development, stakeholder engagement and other qualifying eligible costs. The State of Alaska/DCCED incurred pre-agreement costs and will seek reimbursement for these costs, which are reasonable and allowable in accordance with 2 CFR 200 Subpart E. These include costs for salaries and fringe benefits for program staff based on the individual percentage of time each staff member spent administering CDBG-DR funds, as well as direct operating cost, travel and per diem.

CDBG-DR pre-award costs incurred by the State of Alaska/DCCED and its subrecipients are eligible for reimbursement to the extent they would have been allowable after the award, subject to:

- Inclusion in the CDBG-DR Action Plan or a subsequent amendment;
- Compliance with environmental review requirements under 24 CFR Part 58;
- Compliance with all other applicable statutory and regulatory provisions, including qualification as a CDBG-DR eligible activity; and
- Compliance with all applicable cross-cutting requirements, including but not limited to the environmental requirements, the Davis Bacon Act, Civil Rights Requirements, HUD's Lead Safe Housing Rule, and the URA.

4.8. Program Income

Section II.E. of the Consolidated Notice (Federal Register, 88 FR 32046 (FR-6393-N-01, Typhoon Merbok), Thursday, May 18, 2023) defines program income as gross income generated from the use of CDBG-DR funds, except as provided in III.E.1.b., and received by a state, local government, Indian tribe receiving funds from a grantee, or their subrecipients. Program income includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Proceeds from the disposition by sale or long-term lease of real property purchased or improved with CDBG-DR funds.
- Proceeds from the disposition of equipment purchased with CDBG-DR funds.
- Gross income from the use or rental of real or personal property acquired by a state, local government, or subrecipient thereof with CDBG-DR funds, less costs incidental to generation of the income.
- Gross income from the use or rental of real property owned by a state, local government, or subrecipient thereof, that was constructed or improved with CDBG-DR funds, less costs incidental to generation of the income.
- Payments of principal and interest on loans made using CDBG-DR funds.

- Proceeds from the sale of loans made with CDBG-DR funds.
- Proceeds from the sale of obligations secured by loans made with CDBG-DR funds.
- Interest earned on program income pending disposition of the income, including interest earned on funds held in a revolving loan account.
- Funds collected through special assessments made against nonresidential properties and properties owned and occupied by non-LMI households, where the special assessments are used to recover all or part of the CDBG-DR portion of a public improvement.
- Gross income paid to a state, local government, or subrecipient thereof, from the ownership interest in a for-profit entity in which the income is in return for the provision of CDBG-DR assistance.

When income is generated by an activity that is only partially funded with CDBG-DR funds, the income shall be prorated to reflect the percentage of CDBG-DR funds used. If CDBG funds are used with CDBG-DR funds on an activity, any income earned on the CDBG portion would not be subject to the waiver and alternative requirement in the Consolidated Notice (Federal Register, 88 FR 32046 (FR-6393-N-01, Typhoon Merbok), Thursday, May 18, 2023).

If the State of Alaska receives and retains program income before or after the closeout of the grant and continues disaster recovery activities, program income will be treated as additional CDBG-DR funds subject to the requirements of the Consolidated Notice (Federal Register, 88 FR 32046 (FR-6393-N-01, Typhoon Merbok) Thursday, May 18, 2023), and will be used in accordance with the disaster recovery action plan (this document).

Grantees must use all program income received during an open CDBG-DR grant prior to drawing remaining CDBG grant funds. As a state grantee, the State of Alaska/DCCED may transfer program income to its annual CDBG program before closeout of the grant that generated the program income, or to any annual CDBG-funded activities carried out by a local government within the state.

All program income is subject to CDBG-DR regulations. The State of Alaska/DCCED can require that subrecipients return program income to the State or allow subrecipients to use program income for current and future CDBG-eligible activities. Any program income received that is not used to continue the disaster recovery activity will be subject to the state of Alaska's regular CDBG program rules, not the rules of the Consolidated Notice. Any other transfer of program income not specifically addressed in the Consolidated Notice may be carried out if the grantee first seeks and then receives HUD's approval.

Section III.E.1.e. of the Consolidated Notice (Federal Register, 88 FR 32046 (FR-6393-N-01, Typhoon Merbok) Thursday, May 18, 2023) provides a waiver and alternative requirement for Indian tribes that may be used if CDBG-DR funds are sub awarded to eligible entities. Program income earned by Indian tribes that receive an allocation from HUD will be governed by the regulations at 24 CFR 1003.503 until grant closeout and not by the waivers and alternative requirements in the Consolidated Notice. Program income earned by Indian tribes that are subrecipients of a state grantee will be subject to the program income requirements for subrecipients of the State of Alaska.

4.9. Resale or Recapture

Resale or recapture requirements vary by program and may not be applicable to all CDBG-DR programs. If applicable, the resale or recapture requirements are described within each of the program sections below. Program guidelines will provide additional details on the terms of resale or recapture and the specific circumstances under which resale or recapture will be used. The State of Alaska will ensure that affordability restrictions are enforceable and imposed by recorded deed restrictions, covenants, property liens, bylaws, or other similar mechanisms.

4.10. Program Details

Administration

DCCED will retain the full 5% allocated for administration costs associated with the CDBG-DR allocation for purposes of oversight, management, and reporting. State administrative costs, including subrecipient administration costs, will not exceed 5%, or \$1,924,650. Pursuant to 24 CFR 58.34(a)(3), except for applicable requirements of 24 CFR §58.6, administrative and management activities are exempt activities under this Action Plan. Once contracted, DCCED will allow the drawdown of pre-agreement costs associated with eligible disaster recovery activities dating back to the date of the disaster (September 15, 2022) for subrecipients and DCCED with appropriate documentation.

Planning and Coordination Program

DCCED will retain the full 15%, or \$5,773,950 for planning associated with the CDBG-DR allocation. DCCED may sub-allocate the CDBG-DR planning funds to CDBG-DR eligible jurisdictions in the Bering Strait Regional Educational Attendance Area (REAA), Lower Yukon REAA, Kashunamiut REAA, Lower Kuskokwim REAA, Yupiit REAA, and the Pribilof Islands REAA. Once contracted, DCCED will allow the drawdown of pre-agreement costs associated with eligible disaster recovery activities dating back to the date of the disaster (September 15, 2022) for subrecipients and DCCED with appropriate documentation.

Disaster recovery presents affected communities with unique opportunities to examine a wide range of issues such as drainage and flood control, housing quality and availability, transportation networks, environmental issues, and the adequacy of existing infrastructure. DCCED will support long-term plans that promote sound, sustainable, long-term recovery planning informed by a post-disaster evaluation of hazard risks due to ground failure, tsunamis, and flooding, where applicable, especially land-use decisions that reflect responsible floodplain management. DCCED will coordinate as much as possible with local and state planning efforts to ensure consistency, to promote community-level post-typhoon disaster recovery and mitigation, and to leverage those efforts. As detailed later in this Action Plan, DCCED will utilize partnerships with vendors (term which shall include, but not limited to, governmental entities, non-profit and for-profit firms, entities, and organizations) to further coordinate planning, studies, and data analysis.

The Unmet Needs Assessment identified the following recommendations for improving Hazard Mitigation Plan coverage in the MID areas:

Recommendation: Fund regional service organizations (i.e., Kawerak, the Association of Village Council Presidents (AVCP) and the Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association (APIA)) to protect assets utilized across jurisdictions through regional hazard mitigation planning activities and planning/capacity-building to develop shovel-ready projects in partnership with communities.

Rationale: Many planning needs were identified by the IRC in their work with a subset of Merbok-impacted communities. These needs include:

- Housing relocation and protect-in-place assessments
- Hazard mitigation plans
- Flood and erosion control assessments
- Geotechnical studies for proposed projects
- Small Community Emergency Response plans
- Food security planning
- Community planning, including planning for new facilities

Please see a list of plans, in addition to the hazard mitigation plan statuses included in Section 2.7.3, in Appendix 5.7.

Recommendation: Confirm whether any jurisdictions that completed Hazard Mitigation Plans shortly before or after Typhoon Merbok identified infrastructure impacts from the disaster event.

Rationale: Not all infrastructure impacts from Typhoon Merbok may have been captured during the planning process due to submittal and review timing or because they were not evident until the following spring. The focus of this recommendation is to identify unmet needs and develop projects to be accomplished through CDBG-DR funding. This information may inform substantial amendment(s) to this Action Plan.

Recommendation: Fund an update of the State of Alaska Hazard Mitigation Plan, to include revised executive summary data that are community-specific in terms of Community Profiles, Critical Facilities, Hazards (including magnitude and probability), and Mitigation Projects.

Rationale: During the development of this CDBG-DR Action Plan, it was initially thought that only those jurisdictions with a current (Hazard Mitigation Plans are approved for five years from the date of FEMA approval), locally adopted and FEMA-approved Hazard Mitigation Plan would be eligible to receive CDBG-DR mitigation set-aside funds. It was then clarified that the State of Alaska's Hazard Mitigation Plan could represent those jurisdictions that do not have a current, locally adopted and FEMA-approved Hazard Mitigation Plan, making them eligible to receive CDBG-DR mitigation set-aside funds. With the changes in funding mechanisms for hazard mitigation plans, it is unknown what funding will support the upcoming State of Alaska Hazard Mitigation Plan, due in 2028. It should be noted that the CDBG-DR Mitigation Set-aside requires the grantee or subrecipient to have a current, locally adopted and FEMA-approved Hazard Mitigation Plan. Other programs funded by the CDBG-DR allocation (e.g., Administration, Planning, Housing) do not have this requirement.

Recommendation: Support other community-identified planning activities that support communities to implement mitigation and other CDBG-DR activities, such as housing or economic development.

Recommendation: Fund the state recovery office, the State of Alaska Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHS&EM) for Hazard Mitigation Planning Review, to include technical assistance and review of Hazard Mitigation Plans that are funded through other programs.

Rationale: Several funding mechanisms are used in Alaska for the development of local and tribal Hazard Mitigation Plans (e.g., BIA, CDBG, EPA, NOAA, ANTHC). Historically, PDM, BRIC and HMGP funds have been used by DHS&EM to directly fund a jurisdiction's Hazard Mitigation Plan, or funded DHS&EM to hire contractors to complete blocks of Hazard Mitigation Plans for jurisdictions throughout the state. DHS&EM can support administrative management, technical assistance during plan development, and Hazard Mitigation Plan review, which is required before the plan is submitted to FEMA for formal review and approval.

When HMPs are funded and developed without oversight and technical assistance from DHS&EM, the following issues may occur:

- Funding for administrative management, technical assistance, and Hazard Mitigation Plan reviews are not adequately budgeted in external funds to support DHS&EM's role in the Hazard Mitigation Planning process.
- Jurisdictions that independently create or update a Hazard Mitigation Plan may fail to correctly understand the FEMA requirements, resulting in the expenditure of grant funding that does not meet State and FEMA requirements, depending upon which jurisdictions participate in the planning process.
- If a Tribe submits its Hazard Mitigation Plan directly to FEMA instead of submitting the plan through DHS&EM first, the Tribe will be unable to benefit from the matching funds that DHS&EM can use to support the costs of the plan.
- When Tribal Hazard Mitigation Plans are submitted directly to FEMA, without DHS&EM consultations, the Tribal and local Hazard Mitigation Plans may fail to inform the State Hazard Mitigation Planning process, a FEMA requirement.
- A Tribal Hazard Mitigation Planning process that does not invite or include a local municipal jurisdiction in the process may miss the benefits of a multi-jurisdictional planning process.

Planning Activities

Hazard Mitigation, Community and Targeted Plans

This action plan allocates \$5,523,950 for

- Bering Strait Regional Educational Attendance Area (REAA) planning activities
- Lower Yukon REAA planning activities
- Kashunamiut REAA planning activities
- Lower Kuskokwim REAA planning activities
- Yupiit REAA, planning activities
- Pribilof Islands REAA planning activities

Eligible planning activities consist of data gathering, studies, analysis, preparation of plans and the identification of actions that will implement such plans, including, but not limited to:

- (1) Hazard Mitigation Plans
- (2) Comprehensive plans
- (3) Community development plans
- (4) Functional plans
- (5) Other plans and studies, including but not limited to housing relocation and protect-in-place assessments, flood and erosion control assessments, geotechnical studies for proposed projects, Small Community Emergency Response plans, food security planning, and planning for new facilities. This may also apply to surveying, mapping and feasibility studies.
- (6) Policy planning, management, and capacity building activities.

Award cap: \$100,000 per plan or planning activity. Exceptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Eligible applicants: Regional entities such as Kawerak, AVCP, APIA, federally recognized Tribes, Tribal organizations, regional nonprofit organizations, regional housing authorities, Alaska Native organizations, councils of governments, boroughs, cities, and other units of local government serving communities located within HUD-Identified and State-Identified Most Impacted and Distressed (MID) areas.

This action plan allocates \$250,000 for a reimbursable support agreement with the State of Alaska Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHS&EM) for Hazard Mitigation Planning Review.

Award cap: \$250,000. Exceptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Homeowner Recovery Program

The Homeowner Recovery Program (HRP) provides assistance to residences impacted by 2022 Typhoon Merbok, for housing rehabilitation, housing reconstruction projects, and relocation of homes. Some of the housing rehabilitation needed after the Typhoon has been funded through State and Federal assistance programs, as well as insurance programs; however, many gaps remain. As documented in the joint (Federal/State) Recovery Needs Assessment and Recovery Strategy for DR-4672-AK (October 2023), many homeowners did not submit applications for these assistance programs. The State of Alaska/DCCED will use CDBG-DR funding to help fill the remaining gaps, after accounting for other duplicative benefits received. Due to high construction costs in these remote areas, widespread economic challenges (nearly half the population in much of the MID areas meets LMI criteria), and the geographic scope of this CDBG-DR allocation, the funding allocated under 88 FR 32046 is extremely limited.

This program is intended to provide for standard construction costs. Only costs incurred after an award will be eligible for reimbursement; reimbursement of pre-award costs is not allowed. All applicable construction and contractor standards will be followed; details to be provided in the program guidelines.

Program Tieback to Disaster/Unmet Needs

This program is limited to individuals and properties impacted by 2022 Typhoon Merbok in the HUD- and Grantee-identified MID areas. Priority is given to those jurisdictions most impacted by the disaster (see list under Eligibility criteria). Through this program, the State of Alaska/DCCED will help address the unmet housing recovery needs of these most impacted communities and help build long-term financial and disaster resilience for homeowners. The unmet needs related to the 2022 Typhoon Merbok will be periodically re-evaluated to determine the amount of funding needed to assist as many applicants as possible in this program.

Program National Objectives

This activity meets the National Objective of Low-Moderate Income Housing, as described in 24 CFR 570.483(b)(3) and is an eligible activity under Section 105(a)(4) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974.

Program Method of Distribution

The State of Alaska/DCCED will subaward a directed grant to a contractor to manage application and intake, damage assessment and inspection, construction and case management, and temporary relocation if necessary. The contractor will be selected based on an assessment of their experience and capacity to manage all aspects of this program. The State of Alaska/DCCED will be responsible for developing the program application, forms and guidelines, and monitoring and oversight of the contractor.

Estimated Outcome: This activity may provide long-term permanent housing recovery for approximately 77 households.

Applicant and Project Eligibility & Selection Criteria

Geographic Eligibility: Homes must be located in one of the jurisdictions listed below.

Bering Straits REAA Housing Development/ Redevelopment Project

- City of Nome Housing Recovery Program for eligible homeowners within the City of Nome
- City of Golovin Housing Recovery Program for eligible homeowners within the City of Golovin
- City of Gambell Housing Recovery Program for eligible homeowners within the City of Gambell
- City of Koyuk Housing Recovery Program for eligible homeowners within the City of Koyuk
- City of St. Michael Housing Recovery Program for eligible homeowners within the City of St. Michael
- City of Stebbins Housing Recovery Program for eligible homeowners within the City of Stebbins

Kashunamiut REAA Development/ Redevelopment Project

- City of Chevak Housing Recovery Program for eligible homeowners within the City of Chevak

Lower Yukon REAA Housing Development/ Redevelopment Project

- City of Nunam Iqua Housing Recovery Program for eligible homeowners within Nunam Iqua
- City of Scammon Bay Housing Recovery Program for eligible homeowners within Scammon Bay
- City of Hooper Bay Housing Recovery Program for eligible homeowners within Hooper Bay

Lower Kuskokwim REAA Housing Development/Redevelopment Project

- Native Village of Kipnuk Housing Recovery Program for eligible homeowners within the Native Village of Kipnuk
- City of Nightmute Housing Recovery Program for eligible homeowners within the City of Nightmute
- City of Tooksook Bay Housing Recovery Program for eligible homeowners within the City of Tooksook Bay
- Native Village of Tuntutuliak Housing Recovery Program for eligible homeowners within the Native Village of Tuntutuliak

Eligible Applicants: All geographically-eligible owner-occupants whose primary residence was directly impacted by the 2022 Typhoon Merbok and whose household income (all adults living in the household) is at or below 80% AMI are eligible for the Homeowner Recovery Program. For applicants to recovery programs beginning in 2022 and beyond, the maximum income for participating individuals and families is 80% Area Median Income (AMI). HUD releases AMI updates periodically. AMI information is available at https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/il.html#2022_data. The program will prioritize households with elders (age 65+), ADA-accessibility needs, or other vulnerable populations for the first round of assistance.

Eligible and Ineligible Activities

The HRP will serve eligible homeowners who experienced major to severe damage to their homes with unmet needs resulting from the 2022 Typhoon Merbok. Assistance offered through this program may include rehabilitation, repair, reconstruction, and new construction activities for eligible homeowners. Available homeowner assistance is listed below.

To ensure consistency, as well as necessary and reasonable cost assurance, DCCED may require HUD FHA 203(k) inspections on all housing units. DCCED may require peer reviews by licensed registered engineering firms for all housing projects. DCCED may require the use of RS Means data and the FEMA Benefit Cost Analysis Process (IV Reference 40) used by the State of Alaska for the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program to determine whether a project is cost effective.

As specified in 88 FR 32046, Section IV.A.1.(d)(v). *Reassess Unmet Need When Necessary*, DCCED, in conjunction with a partner/vendor (to be selected), will require site inspections of damaged properties using a fully-qualified third-party architect, civil engineer, or construction manager for all proposed rehabilitation/reconstruction, or new construction senior housing or multifamily rental projects. The partner/vendor will prepare an Estimated Cost to Repair (ECR) using a cost estimating program to ensure project costs are necessary, reasonable, and consistent with market costs at the time and place of construction. This cost estimating process will also apply to all economic revitalization and public infrastructure projects. The partner/vendor will require scopes of work that meet all AHFC, State, HUD, and Federal regulations.

For homeowners who wish to remain in their homes or rebuild on their existing property, the program will provide grants for Housing Rehabilitation, Housing Reconstruction Projects, and Relocation. Applicants eligible for rehabilitation assistance may reach a level of repair scope, cost, or other situation in which reconstruction, instead of rehabilitation, is more feasible. Building a new home on a different

site is also allowable in certain situations, as determined by house and site restrictions assessed by the HRP.

Ineligible Activities

Ineligible activities are defined in 24 CFR 570.207, and include, but are not limited to, buildings or portions thereof used for conduct of government; general government expenses; political activities; purchase of equipment (except as provided for in 24 CFR 570.201(c)); operating and maintenance expenses; and income payments.

Allocation Amount

The Homeowner Recovery Program budget is \$15,423,400, of which:

- 80% (\$12,338,720) is allocated to HUD-identified MID areas: Bering Strait Regional Education Attendance Area (REAA) – including the City of Nome, Kashunamiut REAA, Lower Yukon REAA
- 20% (\$3,084,680) is allocated to Grantee-identified MID areas: Lower Kuskokwim REAA, Yupiit REAA, Pribilof Islands REAA

Program Maximum Assistance

Maximum Award: The maximum assistance for all Homeowner Recovery Programs will be capped at the same amount for SBA Disaster Home Loan, which was \$200,000 for homeowners in 2022 at the time of the disaster.

The maximum assistance for Voluntary Housing Buyout Programs will be indexed to the current Federal Housing Administration (FHA) Loan limits for 1-4 dwelling units.

Table 72. Federal Housing Administration (FHA) Loan limits (CY2025)

Name of Jurisdiction	1-Family	2-Family	3-Family	4-Family	Median Sale Price
Nome Census Area (Bering Strait REAA)	\$ 524,225	\$ 671,200	\$ 811,275	\$ 1,008,300	\$ 368,000
Kusilvak Census Area (Lower Yukon REAA, Kashunamiut REAA)	\$ 524,225	\$ 671,200	\$ 811,275	\$ 1,008,300	\$ 111,000
Bethel Census Area (Lower Kuskokwim REAA, Yupiit REAA)	\$ 524,225	\$ 671,200	\$ 811,275	\$ 1,008,300	\$ 163,000
Aleutians West Borough (Pribilof REAA)	\$ 585,350	\$ 749,350	\$ 905,800	\$ 1,125,700	\$ 509,000

Data Source(s): FHA Mortgage Limits. Available at: <https://entp.hud.gov/idapp/html/hicostlook.cfm> Accessed: September 19, 2025.

Exceptions: Exceptions will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Program Estimated Begin and End Dates

The program is expected to start in 2026 and continue until all budgeted funds have been expended and all eligible participants have completed project closeout, or six (6) years after execution of the grant agreement with HUD (January 16, 2030).

New Single Family Housing Development Program

Funds allocated for this program will provide for the development of new, affordable housing with 1-4 dwelling units. The goal of this program is to address the unmet housing needs resulting from and exacerbated by Typhoon Merbok. The program is designed to ensure that the housing needs of very-low, low- and moderate-income households and vulnerable populations, including individuals that were made homeless as a result of the disaster, are addressed to the greatest extent possible.

Program Tieback to Disaster/Unmet Needs

This program is an opportunity to construct housing to meet a portion of the pre-disaster unmet need and to give families whose homes were impacted by Typhoon Merbok DR-AK-4672 a place for temporary relocation while impacted homes are assessed for protect-in-place or relocation.

The unmet needs assessment found that the MID areas had an overwhelming pre-disaster unmet housing need that was exacerbated by Typhoon Merbok. Even without housing damage from the disaster, the Association of Village Council Presidents Regional Housing Authority (AVCP RHA) Strategic Plan and Housing Need Forecast (2025)¹² shows that with existing funding sources (e.g. NAHASDA), the regional Tribally Designated Housing Entity (TDHE) would need over a century to meet existing regional unmet need for housing in the Lower Yukon and Lower Kuskokwim sub regions due to limited population growth, extremely high rates of overcrowding and unmet rehabilitation needs for aging or substandard housing stock (i.e., housing without kitchen and/or plumbing facilities).

Program National Objectives

Projects under this program will meet the National Objective of Low-Moderate Income Housing, as described in 24 CFR 570.483(b)(3) and is an eligible activity under Section 105(a)(4) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974.

Program Method of Distribution

The State of Alaska/DCCED intends to award CDBG-DR funds as reimbursable agreements to subrecipients, who would be responsible for administering the project and maintaining compliance with the terms of the subrecipient agreement. A pre-award risk assessment will be completed for each subrecipient prior to award. Subrecipients are anticipated to include the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC), the Bering Strait Regional Housing Authority (RHA) and/or the Association of Village Council Presidents Regional Housing Authority (AVCP RHA), which are the Tribally Designated Housing Entities (TDHEs) that serve communities in the MID areas. These subrecipients are anticipated because of their experience working with HUD grants, their capacity to handle all administrative and programmatic requirements, and their knowledge of planning, construction and operation of housing projects in their respective service areas.

Estimated Outcome: This activity may provide long-term permanent housing recovery for approximately 15-38 households.

¹² Association of Village Council Presidents Regional Housing Authority (AVCP RHA), 2025. *Strategic Plan and Housing Need Forecast*. Available: <https://www.avcphousing.org/wp-content/uploads/AVCP-RHA-Strategic-Plan-v5-April-update.pdf>. Accessed: 08/20/2025.

Applicant and Project Eligibility & Selection Criteria

To be eligible for this program, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- The applicant must be a legally formed entity qualified to do business in the State of Alaska as of the application deadline.
- The applicant has provided evidence of ownership or other legal contract providing for its use/development of the project site.
- There is a preference to partner with applicants that have previous experience administering projects of a similar size and scope and/or working with federal or state housing grant funds.
- The new housing project must be located in the Bering Straits REAA, Kashunamiut REAA, Lower Yukon REAA, Lower Kuskokwim REAA, Yupiit REAA, or Pribilof Islands REAA.

Eligible and Ineligible Activities

Bering Strait RHA New Senior Housing Project

The Bering Strait Elder Housing project is a mixed-income Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) project with 12-32 units for seniors. A building design, modeled on the Emerald Heights senior living facility in Kodiak, Alaska, is currently underway with an architectural team. The project will be permitted and a general contractor competitively procured upon design completion. The full project scope consists of 12-32 senior units, including a mix of efficiencies, one- and two-bedroom units, communal kitchen and living area. Full project buildout includes 32 units contained in a single three-story building. If available funding will not support the full project buildout, the Bering Strait Regional Housing Authority would initially build a single story design with 12 housing units and common areas. The project will be located on a 37-acre parcel owned by the Bering Strait Regional Housing Authority, located in the Icy View subdivision, adjacent to existing water and sewer connections.

At least 70% of the 12-32 units will be income restricted, serving households at 80% AMI or less. Construction of this phase will commence in Spring 2026. Construction will be complete in Fall 2027 with full lease-up occurring thereafter. The minimum affordability period is thirty (30) years for this project.

Allocation Amount: \$8,000,000

Geographic Eligibility and Priority: Nome is located within the Bering Strait Regional Educational Attendance Area, a HUD-defined “most impacted and distressed” jurisdiction.

Eligible Applicants: Bering Strait Regional Housing Authority

Projected Project Start Date: December 2025

Projected Project End Date: October 2027

AVCP RHA New Housing Project

Funding is allocated to the AVCP RHA for new housing construction in the Kashunamiut REAA and Lower Yukon REAA (HUD-identified MID areas), and the Lower Kuskokwim REAA (Grantee-identified MID area).

The AVCP RHA projects include a new duplex in Chevak (Kashunamiut REAA), with an estimated \$1,000,000 total project cost. Planning, site control and environmental review preparation is scheduled for 2026, infrastructure and lot development in 2027, construction of new housing in 2028, and project close out in 2029.

Additional funding up to \$200,000/dwelling unit may be provided to leverage the AVCP RHA's Homebuyer Program for the construction of new housing (1-4 dwelling units) in the Native Village of Kipnuk, City of Nightmute, City of Tooksook Bay, City of Hooper Bay or City of Bethel in 2026-2027.

Allocation Amount: \$2,000,000

Geographic Eligibility and Priority: Chevak and Hooper Bay are located within the Kashunamiut and Lower Yukon Regional Educational Attendance Areas, both HUD-defined "most impacted and distressed" jurisdictions.

Eligible Applicants: Association of Village Council Presidents (AVCP) Regional Housing Authority

Projected Project Start Date: December 2025

Projected Project End Date: December 2029

Allocation Amount

The New Single Family Housing Program budget is \$10,000,000, of which 80% is allocated to new housing in HUD-identified MID areas: Bering Strait Regional Education Attendance Area (REAA) – including the City of Nome, and the Kashunamiut REAA, and 20% is allocated to new housing Grantee-identified MID areas: Lower Kuskokwim REAA, Yupiit REAA.

Program Maximum Assistance

Maximum Award: Maximum Project Award is \$8,000,000

Exceptions: Exceptions will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Program Estimated Begin and End Dates

The program is expected to start in 2026 and continue until all budgeted funds have been expended and all eligible participants have completed project closeout, or six (6) years after execution of the grant agreement with HUD (January 16, 2030).

Public Services - Legal Services

Through the Legal Services Program, the State of Alaska/DCCED will provide funding to qualified legal aid and/or legal services providers to deliver the assistance necessary to help impacted residents transition to more permanent housing. In the aftermath of a disaster, legal services are a critical component of comprehensive disaster relief. Legal resources are often unattainable and/or unaffordable to Latine, black, indigenous, and people of color, HUD-defined vulnerable populations, and LMI households as they work through the challenges of recovery that require legal representation, support, and/or analysis. Failure to resolve these legal issues often results in the denial of recovery resources and/or delays to recovery; these delays and denials disproportionately impact communities of color and individuals with limited English proficiency.

Program Tieback to Disaster/Unmet Needs

The program provides services to individuals and households impacted by the 2022 Typhoon Merbok. This assistance is critical for helping residents navigate the legal challenges that serve as barriers to recovery and maintain legal access to their recovery housing.

Program National Objectives

Projects under this program will meet the National Objective of Low-Moderate Income Housing, as described in 24 CFR 570.483(b)(3) and is an eligible activity under Section 105(a)(4) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974.

Program Method of Distribution

The State of Alaska/DCCED may administer the program directly and/or through subrecipients. While the State intends to mainly enter into agreements with subrecipients, there may be regions or communities in the disaster impacted areas where services may only be available through the State. The program policies or public funding announcements will provide information on how qualified providers will receive awards to provide eligible services to eligible applicants. The State may allocate funds to eligible subrecipients and/or competitively procure service providers.

Program Responsible Entity

The State of Alaska/DCCED (the administering entity) and/or its subrecipients.

Program Eligibility

Geographic eligibility:

- HUD-identified MID areas: Bering Strait Regional Education Attendance Area (REAA) – including the City of Nome, Kashunamiut REAA, Lower Yukon REAA
- Grantee-identified MID areas: Lower Kuskokwim REAA, Yupiit REAA, Pribilof Islands REAA

Applicants must be a renter or homeowner actively participating in the CDBG-DR Homeowner Recovery Program and have a household income at or below 80% AMI.

Eligible and Ineligible Activities

Eligible Activities under the Legal Services Program will meet the requirements of Section 105(a) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (HCDA), applicable waivers identified in the Consolidated Notice (88 FR 32046), and/or other applicable waivers or alternative requirements.

Assistance will be provided to eligible subrecipients or State of Alaska/DCCED-contracted legal services providers to deliver the following types of assistance:

- Replacing identification papers.
- Working through insurance claims.
- Clearing property titles and working through heirship and probate.
- Fighting unlawful evictions and foreclosures.
- Combating contractor scams and fraud.
- Assistance with school transfers.
- Obtaining emergency child custody, visitation, support, and other court orders requiring modification as a result of displacement, injury, or job loss.
- Other legal services needed for applicants to complete their recovery through one of the other CDBG-DR programs.

Allocation Amount

The Legal Services Program budget is \$385,000, of which:

- 80% (\$280,000) is allocated to HUD-identified MID areas: Bering Strait Regional Education Attendance Area (REAA) – including the City of Nome, Kashunamiut REAA, Lower Yukon REAA
- 20% (\$70,000) is allocated to Grantee-identified MID areas: Lower Kuskokwim REAA, Yupiit REAA, Pribilof Islands REAA

Program Maximum Assistance

The award cap for legal services is set at \$10,000 per household. Exceptions will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Program Estimated Begin and End Dates

The program is expected to start in 2026 and continue until all budgeted funds have been expended and all eligible participants have completed project closeout, or six (6) years after execution of the grant agreement with HUD (January 16, 2030).

Flood and Erosion Mitigation Infrastructure Program

The goal of this program is to assist eligible applicants in addressing mitigation related infrastructure needs that will reduce the risk of erosion and flooding, which were the most frequently identified hazards in the Mitigation Needs Assessment. This program will fund yet-to-be-identified mitigation projects that will reduce erosion and flood risk in the MID areas. Activities funded under this program will be used to satisfy the MIT set-aside required under this award. Other local, state or federal resources may be leveraged with this funding.

Program Tieback to Disaster/Unmet Needs

This program is an opportunity to construct infrastructure to mitigate against future storms and/or flood events in the MID areas. Prior to Typhoon Merbok, there was significant unmet mitigation need for flood and erosion control. See Section 2.6 for more on pre-disaster mitigation unmet need. This program is an opportunity to protect critical infrastructure by stabilizing eroded shorelines and reinforcing flood defenses to withstand more frequent and severe natural disasters, preventing repeat loss of homes and essential public infrastructure. Erosion control can protect subsistence areas critical for communities to thrive in rural western Alaska.

This Unmet Needs Assessment identified significant flooding, coastal erosion, and storm surge damage from Typhoon Merbok. These are persistent threats to long-term housing stability, infrastructure functionality, and economic recovery in MID areas. Based on these findings, funding is prioritized to support projects that directly reduce repetitive losses and loss of critical public infrastructure in MID areas, recognizing that without mitigation, communities remain vulnerable to future storm events of similar or greater magnitude. Flood and erosion mitigation reduce the likelihood of economic disruptions, displacement, and emergency evacuations as seen during Typhoon Merbok. These investments will decrease the need for repetitive emergency repairs and future disaster assistance.

Program National Objectives

Projects under this program will meet the national objectives of benefiting low- and moderate-income (LMI) areas or addressing and urgent need (UN). The program may use Urgent Need National Objective to aid the eligible disaster impacted areas where fewer than 51% of the residents are low-to-moderate-income. The Urgent Need national objective will only be used when an LMI national objective cannot be

achieved through the project, but the project has demonstrable recovery or mitigation benefits within the most impacted and distressed (MID) areas.

Program Method of Distribution

Funding for the Mitigation Program will be awarded to eligible entities through an application process aimed at identifying eligible mitigation projects with the highest need.

Program Responsible Entity

The State of Alaska/DCCED intends to distribute CDBG-DR funds to subrecipients. The selected subrecipients would be responsible for administering the project and maintaining compliance with the terms of the subrecipient agreement. A pre-award risk assessment will be completed for each subrecipient prior to award.

Applicant and Project Eligibility

This program is designed to allow for a flexible range of eligible activities to help local entities address the mitigation needs of their disaster-impacted communities.

Mitigation funds can be used to:

- Develop standalone mitigation projects which will be funded solely with CDBG-DR mitigation funds.
- Develop mitigation projects that will use CDBG-DR mitigation funds to meet a local match requirement or in conjunction with other local, state and/or federal funding.

Projects must demonstrate a clear tie-back to Typhoon Merbok-related impacts. 80% of mitigation funding will be allocated to HUD-identified MID communities; 20% will be allocated to State-identified MID communities. Projects must be feasible and cost-effective, ensuring that mitigation addresses current and future risks, not solely repairing past damage. Projects must comply with HUD requirements. Disaster-related impacts to be addressed may include repeated and severe erosion of housing areas, airstrips, barge landing sites, roadways, other transportation infrastructure, and energy infrastructure; flooding of residential and community-serving structures including sewage and solid waste infrastructure; and threatened cultural and subsistence resources critical to long-term community resilience.

Eligible Applicants

Tribal and local governments; State departments and divisions; regional entities with established authority and internal controls necessary to receive federal funds; regional non-profit corporations; non-profit Native Corporations; and regional housing authorities within the Bering Straits REAA, Kashunamiut REAA, Lower Yukon REAA, Lower Kuskokwim REAA, Yupiit REAA, and Pribilof Islands REAA.

Eligible Projects or Activities

Eligible projects must:

- Meet the HUD definition of Mitigation. Activities that increase resilience to disasters and reduce or eliminate the long-term risk of loss of life, injury, damage to and loss of property, and suffering and hardship, by lessening the impact of future disasters.

- Align with local and/or regional plans, if available. Projects submitted to the State of Alaska for funding should demonstrate a connection to goals and objectives of local or regional planning documents, if available and relevant to current on-the-ground conditions.
- Mitigate flood and/or erosion risk. This program will prioritize projects that mitigate risk to repeated and severe damage to critical public infrastructure.

Ineligible Activities

Ineligible activities are defined in 24 CFR 570.207, and include, but are not limited to, buildings or portions thereof used for conduct of government; general government expenses; political activities; purchase of equipment (except as provided for in 24 CFR 570.201(c)); operating and maintenance expenses; and income payments.

In addition, activities that do not meet a HUD national objective will not be eligible for funding.

Program Maximum Assistance

This plan allocates the mitigation set-aside of \$5,021,000 of CDBG-DR funding to eligible subrecipient(s) for flood and erosion mitigation measures, to be distributed consistent with the requirements outlined in Section 4.6. The award cap is set at \$1,000,000, with 5-6 awards anticipated. Infrastructure to protect housing will be prioritized and exceptions determined on a case-by-case basis.

Program Estimated Begin and End Dates

The program is expected to start in 2026 and continue until all budgeted funds have been expended and all eligible participants have completed project closeout, or six (6) years after execution of the grant agreement with HUD (January 16, 2030).

Duplication of Benefits

As required by the Stafford Act, the State of Alaska will require subrecipient(s) under this program to verify that there is not a duplication of benefits on each proposed project.

5. Appendix

5.1. Certifications

1. The grantee certifies that it has in effect and is following a residential anti-displacement and relocation assistance plan in connection with any activity assisted with CDBG-DR grant funds that fulfills the requirements of Section 104(d), 24 CFR part 42, and 24 CFR part 570, as amended by waivers and alternative requirements.
2. The grantee certifies its compliance with restrictions on lobbying required by 24 CFR part 87, together with disclosure forms, if required by part 87.
3. The grantee certifies that the action plan for disaster recovery is authorized under state and local law (as applicable) and that the grantee, and any entity or entities designated by the grantee, and any contractor, subrecipient, or designated public agency carrying out an activity with CDBG-DR funds, possess(es) the legal authority to carry out the program for which it is seeking funding, in accordance with applicable HUD regulations as modified by waivers and alternative requirements.
4. The grantee certifies that activities to be undertaken with CDBG-DR funds are consistent with its action plan.
5. The grantee certifies that it will comply with the acquisition and relocation requirements of the URA, as amended, and implementing regulations at 49 CFR part 24, as such requirements may be modified by waivers or alternative requirements.
6. The grantee certifies that it will comply with section 3 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968 (12 U.S.C. 1701u) and implementing regulations at 24 CFR part 75.
7. The grantee certifies that it is following a detailed citizen participation plan that satisfies the requirements of 24 CFR 91.115 or 91.105 (except as provided for in waivers and alternative requirements). Also, each local government receiving assistance from a state grantee must follow a detailed citizen participation plan that satisfies the requirements of 24 CFR 570.486 (except as provided for in waivers and alternative requirements).
8. The state grantee certifies that it has consulted with all disaster-affected local governments (including any CDBG entitlement grantees), tribes, and any local public housing authorities in determining the use of funds, including the MOD, or activities carried out directly by the state.
9. The grantee certifies that it is complying with each of the following criteria:
 - a. Funds will be used solely for necessary expenses related to disaster relief, long-term recovery, restoration of infrastructure and housing, economic revitalization, and mitigation in the MID areas for which the president declared a major disaster pursuant to the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.).
 - b. With respect to activities expected to be assisted with CDBG-DR funds, the action plan has been developed so as to give the maximum feasible priority to activities that will benefit LMI families.
 - c. The aggregate use of CDBG-DR funds shall principally benefit LMI families in a manner that ensures that at least 70 percent (or another percentage permitted by HUD in a waiver) of the grant amount is expended for activities that benefit such persons.

- d. The grantee will not attempt to recover any capital costs of public improvements assisted with CDBG-DR grant funds, by assessing any amount against properties owned and occupied by LMI persons, including any fee charged or assessment made as a condition of obtaining access to such public improvements, unless:
 - i. Disaster recovery grant funds are used to pay the proportion of such fee or assessment that relates to the capital costs of such public improvements that are financed from revenue sources other than under this title.
 - ii. For purposes of assessing any amount against properties owned and occupied by persons of moderate income, the grantee certifies to the secretary that it lacks sufficient CDBG funds (in any form) to comply with the requirements of clause (a).
- 10. State and local government grantees certify that the grant will be conducted and administered in conformity with title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000d), the Fair Housing Act (42 U.S.C. 3601–3619), and implementing regulations, and that it will affirmatively further fair housing. A tribe grantee certifies that the grant will be conducted and administered in conformity with the Indian Civil Rights Act.
- 11. The grantee certifies that it has adopted and is enforcing the following policies and, in addition, state grantees must certify that they will require local governments that receive their grant funds to certify that they have adopted and are enforcing: 1) a policy prohibiting the use of excessive force by law enforcement agencies within its jurisdiction against any individuals engaged in nonviolent civil rights demonstrations and 2) a policy of enforcing applicable state and local laws against physically barring entrance to or exit from a facility or location that is the subject of such nonviolent civil rights demonstrations within its jurisdiction.
- 12. The grantee certifies that it (and any subrecipient or administering entity) currently has or will develop and maintain the capacity to carry out disaster recovery activities in a timely manner and that the grantee has reviewed the requirements applicable to the use of grant funds.
- 13. The grantee certifies to the accuracy of its Financial Management and Grant Compliance Certification Requirements or other recent certification submission, if approved by HUD, and related supporting documentation as provided in Section III.A.1. of the Consolidated Notice and the grantee’s implementation plan and related submissions to HUD as provided in section III.A.2. of the Consolidated Notice.
- 14. The grantee certifies that it will not use CDBG-DR funds for any activity in an area identified as flood-prone for land use or hazard mitigation planning purposes by the state, local, or tribal government or delineated as a Special Flood Hazard Area (or 100-year floodplain) in FEMA’s most current flood advisory maps, unless it also ensures that the action is designed or modified to minimize harm to or within the floodplain, in accordance with Executive Order 11988 and 24 CFR part 55. The relevant data source for this provision is the state, local, and tribal government land use regulations and hazard mitigation plans and the latest-issued FEMA data or guidance, which includes advisory data (such as Advisory Base Flood Elevations) or preliminary and final Flood Insurance Rate Maps.
- 15. The grantee certifies that its activities concerning lead-based paint will comply with the requirements of 24 CFR part 35, subparts A, B, J, K, and R.
- 16. The grantee certifies that it will comply with environmental requirements at 24 CFR part 58.

17. The grantee certifies that it will comply with the provisions of title I of the Housing and Community Development Act and with other applicable laws.

Warning: Any person who knowingly makes a false claim or statement to HUD may be subject to civil or criminal penalties under 18 U.S.C. 287, 1001, and 31 U.S.C. 3729.

July 24, 2025

Brandon McNaughton



5.2. Waivers (if applicable)

To date, the State of Alaska has not requested any additional waivers outside of the general waivers HUD included in Federal Register, 88 FR 32046 (FR-6393-N-01, Typhoon Merbok) Thursday, May 18, 2023 <https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/Portals/4/pub/CDBG-Merbok/FR-6393-N-01-AAN.pdf>, governing the 2022 disaster recovery program funding allocations.

5.3. Summary and Response of Public Comments

The following provides a summary of public comments received for the CDBG-DR Action Plan in response to FEMA Disaster #4672 2022-Typhoon Merbok during the initial public comment period of August 25, 2025 through September 24, 2025. The State of Alaska received a total of seven comments during the 30 calendar days.

5.4. Data Sources/Methodologies

Owner-occupied households:

- Minor-Low: Less than \$3,000 of FEMA-inspected real property damage
- Minor-High: \$3,000 to \$7,999 of FEMA-inspected real property damage
- Major-Low: \$8,000 to \$14,999 of FEMA-inspected real property damage
- Major-High: \$15,000 to \$28,800 of FEMA-inspected real property damage
- Severe: Greater than \$28,800 of FEMA-inspected real property damage

Renter-occupied households:

- Minor-Low: Less than \$1,000 of FEMA-inspected personal property damage
- Minor-High: \$1,000 to \$1,999 of FEMA-inspected personal property damage
- Major-Low: \$3,500 to \$4,999 of FEMA-inspected personal property damage
- Major-High: \$5,000 to \$8,999 of FEMA-inspected personal property damage
- Severe: Greater than \$9,000 of FEMA-inspected personal property damage

Methodology: 2025 Housing Need Forecast

Estimated Pre-Disaster Unmet Housing Need (2023): New housing units needed due to overcrowding (*\$600,000/unit average estimated cost) + units in need of rehabilitation (*\$200,000/unit average estimated cost) = estimated cost of total housing need.

- New units due to overcrowding: estimated using American Community Survey (ACS) data from the U.S. Census Bureau for levels of overcrowding and severely overcrowded households in each geography. Estimated new units due to overcrowding represents immediate housing need.
- *New units due to environmental threats: forthcoming. Not represented in the estimates used for this ARP. Estimated need for new housing units due to environmental threats and climate impacts such as coastal erosion and flooding will be provided by the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium in summer 2025.*
- Sum of new units needed is multiplied by \$600,000/unit, which is an average cost of new construction for these remote Alaska communities (Source: AVCP RHA).
- Number of units in need of rehabilitation or replacement: estimated from ACS data for percent of housing stock built before 1970, percent of occupied units without plumbing and kitchen facilities, and percent of total housing stock that are mobile home units.
- Units in need of rehabilitation or replacement are multiplied by \$200,000/unit, which is an average cost of rehabilitation for homes in these remote Alaska communities (Source: AVCP RHA).

FEMA Individual Assistance and Small Business Association Unmet Need for Typhoon Merbok (2022): Unmet housing need was calculated using FEMA Individual Assistance (IA) data, grouped by REAA. The following FEMA data fields were used:

- Total recommended values were derived by summing the *Preliminary Repair for Verified Loss (RP_FVL)* and *Personal Property Verified Loss (PP_FVL)* fields.
- Total paid values were derived by summing the *Repair Award Amount (REPAIR_AWARD_AMT)*, *Replacement Award Amount (REPLACE_AWARD_AMT)*, and *Personal Property Award Amount (PP_AWARD_AMT)* fields.
- Total remaining unmet need was calculated as the difference between the recommended and paid totals. Where this value was negative—i.e., where award amounts exceeded verified losses—it was adjusted to zero. This adjustment avoids misrepresenting a surplus as a form of “negative unmet need.”
- Totals were aggregated by REAA to align with HUD- and State-identified MID areas.
- The SBA disbursement amount was then subtracted from the overall remaining unmet need to reflect total known federal assistance for housing recovery.

Definitions for Single-family vs. Multi-family Needs; Owner-occupied vs. Tenant, by REAA: HUD’s income limits are not calculated as a simple percentage of local median income. Instead, they are derived from a national formula that incorporates housing cost adjustments, state minimum thresholds, and low-income caps to prevent significant disparities in rental assistance eligibility. As a result, in low-income areas such as the Kusilvak Census Area, HUD’s published 80% Area Median Income (AMI) for a 4-

person household in FY 2023 (\$75,200) exceeds the locally reported median family income (\$42,600). This is a deliberate adjustment intended to preserve housing affordability standards in high-cost or low-income regions.

Additionally, it is important to note that the Kashunamiut REAA and Lower Yukon REAA both fall within the Kusilvak Census Area, and that the Lower Kuskokwim REAA and Yupiit REAA both fall within the Bethel Census Area. Because HUD income limits are published by census area, REAAs within the same census area share the same income limit thresholds for purposes of assessing affordability and program eligibility.

Persons with Disabilities: Data on persons with disabilities were sourced from the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates, Table S1810. Estimates reflect disability status at the place level (i.e., individual communities) rather than by census area. Data were not available for the community of Nunam Iqua.

Income Demographics: Income data presented in Table 7 were sourced from the 2023 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates, Tables B19013 (Median Household Income) and B19301 (Per Capita Income). Data were compiled for each HUD- and state-identified Most Impacted and Distressed (MID) area. However, no income data were available for the communities of Diomedea (Bering Strait REAA), Chevak (Kashunamiut REAA), Nunam Iqua (Lower Yukon REAA), Oscarville and Platinum (Lower Kuskokwim REAA), and Tulusak (Yupiit REAA). These communities were excluded from income calculations for their respective MID areas.

Low- and Moderate-Income (LMI) populations represent a substantial share of the communities affected by the disaster. Based on HUD LMI Summary Data, over 22,500 individuals—more than 70% of the total population in MID areas—qualify as LMI.

Below Poverty Level: Data for Table 8 were compiled from the 2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates, Table S1701, *Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months*, for statewide totals and for HUD- and state-identified Most Impacted and Distressed (MID) areas. No community-level poverty data were available for the community of Nunam Iqua and it is not included in the totals shown.

LMI Analysis Federally Declared Disaster Areas: This analysis uses the HUD ACS 5-Year 2016–2020 Low- and Moderate-Income (LMI) Summary Data at the Census block group level to estimate the number of LMI persons residing within the Typhoon Merbok federally declared disaster area. The LMI dataset provides the number and percentage of individuals classified as low- and moderate-income based on HUD’s Section 8 income limits and ACS data. These figures are used to inform unmet needs and support the targeting of CDBG-DR resources.

No data are reported for non-MID areas because all communities impacted by the Typhoon Merbok disaster fall within HUD- or State-identified Most Impacted and Distressed (MID) areas.

Geographic boundaries used in this analysis include Census block groups, tracts, and Census Areas, which do not always align cleanly with disaster declarations, municipal boundaries, or educational service areas (REAAs). In rural Alaska, many Census tracts cover large geographic areas and may include multiple communities, portions of multiple REAAs, or both. This results in two key limitations:

- Declared/non-declared overlap: Some Census block groups contain a mix of communities, only some of which were included in the federal disaster declaration for Typhoon Merbok. Because LMI data are available only at the block group level, LMI population estimates may include residents outside the declared area.
- Multi-community composition: Several block groups encompass more than one community or REAA, complicating attribution of LMI status to a single jurisdiction. For example, Kusilvak Census Area, Tract 1, Block 4 includes all of the Kashunamiut REAA and a portion of the Lower Yukon REAA. Similarly, Bethel Census Area, Tract 1, Block 3 contains all of the Yupiit REAA and a portion of the Lower Kuskokwim REAA.

To mitigate these limitations, communities were grouped by shared census geography and LMI population was attributed only once per block group to avoid duplication. Where necessary, assumptions were made to conservatively allocate LMI data within the declared disaster area, prioritizing inclusion of declared communities while acknowledging data constraints inherent to small-area Census geographies in rural Alaska.

Point-in-Time Count – Type of Shelter (January 31, 2023): Information requests were sent to providers of shelter and support services for people experiencing homelessness in the impacted areas. The Bethel Homeless Coalition, Nome Community Center and Bay Haven (in Hooper Bay) have confirmed that *no homeless persons or support facilities were impacted by Typhoon Merbok in their respective areas. The Emmonak Women's Shelter is located along the Yukon River. Although information requests to providers did not result in reports of direct impact to the building, a substantial increase in erosion of the land adjacent to the building was reported.* Point-in-Time (PIT) Count data is collected annually and reported by Continuums of Care (CoCs) to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The most relevant CoC for the impacted regions is the Alaska Balance of State CoC (AK-500), which covers the majority of rural and remote communities across the state. However, PIT data is generally not disaggregated to the level of individual REAAs or communities, and disaster-specific counts are not available. The table will be updated once local CoC partners provide region-specific data for the 2022 disaster period.

How HUD allocates CDBG-DR funding: FEMA IA Data generally capture homeowners who are uninsured for disaster and renters who are very low-income (or below poverty) and whose units were damaged by the disaster. While landlords may have insurance, HUD assumes that rental units occupied by very low-income tenants and seriously damaged will not be affordable if repaired or replaced, thus creating a need for affordable units. FEMA inspections record the level of damage but not the likely cost to repair to code. SBA Disaster Recovery Home Loan data records how much the damaged homes will require for repair to code and how many households are addressing their need with SBA assistance.

Infrastructure Unmet Need: Infrastructure unmet need was calculated using publicly-available FEMA Public Assistance data collected through June 2025. PA Categories C-G were used for the final Unmet Need Calculation. A 30% Resiliency factor of the base infrastructure cost was included in the Infrastructure Unmet Need calculation, per 78 FR 69104 (2013). The PA dataset included some geographical inconsistencies which were corrected. It is noted in the Infrastructure section that the FEMA PA dataset does not represent all infrastructure-related unmet needs, as some infrastructure damages were not recorded or submitted for recovery funds through FEMA PA.

Mitigation Unmet Need: The mitigation unmet need was estimated using data provided by the State of Alaska regarding FEMA’s Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP). HMGP grant funds were made available following DR-4672 and approximately \$15 million was allocated to projects across the State. However, no projects were submitted for DR-4672 from any of the communities affected by the disaster. St. Michael considered applying, but their project was ultimately submitted the following year under DR-4730 for Lower Yukon Flooding. Kawerak submitted notice of intents on behalf of Gamble and Elim, but HMGP did not have funding for 8 million- and 12-million-dollar projects. These projects, totaling 20 million dollars, are added to the mitigation unmet need calculation. Data gaps in mitigation unmet need mean that this estimate is a significant underestimate of the remaining unmet need across Merbok-impacted communities.

IRC Data: The IRC provided two datasets capturing projects in 13 Merbok-impacted communities. Limitations of this data, as indicated by FEMA staff, include that the datasets are not necessarily updated routinely, that the datasets do not capture all ongoing projects in the community, and that the level of detail for each project is not consistent (e.g. a sanitation project may be listed as sub-projects including planning, design, and engineering or it may be listed only as “sanitation project”). The purpose of the spreadsheet was for IRC members to better track complex projects across multiple communities. For these reasons, IRC data was not used to calculate dollar amounts for unmet needs related to housing, infrastructure, public services, or mitigation. However, qualitative review of the data did inform the understanding of unmet needs in Merbok-affected communities and was considered for the Proposed Use of Funds. Table 39 is included because mitigation-related projects were a data gap in our analysis. Methodology and limitations of that IRC data analysis are provided in detail in Section 2.4.

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5.5. Important Definitions and Terms

AMI: Area median income

CBDO: Community-Based Development Organization

CDBG: Community Development Block Grant

CDBG-DR: Community Development Block Grant—Disaster Recovery

CFR: Code of Federal Regulations

CO: Certifying Officer

CP: Participation

DOB: Duplication of Benefits

DRGR: Disaster Recovery and Grant Reporting System

FEMA: Federal Emergency Management Agency

HCD Act: Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended

HMGP: Hazard Mitigation Grant Program

IA: (FEMA) Individual Assistance

LIHTC: Low-Income Housing Tax Credit

LMI: Low- and moderate-income

MID: Most Impacted and Distressed

NFIP: National Flood Insurance Program

MOD: Method of distribution

PA: (FEMA) Public Assistance

RE: Responsible entity

RFP: Request for proposals

SBA: U.S. Small Business Administration

SFHA: Special Flood Hazard Area

UGLG: Unit of general local government

URA: Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act of 1970, as amended

USACE: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

5.6. Community-level Plans

Locality	REAA	Other Plans, excluding Hazard Mitigation Plans (which can be found in Section 2.7.3)
Brevig Mission	Bering Strait REAA	Long Range Transportation Plan and Tribal Safety Management Plan, Local Economic Development Plan for Brevig Mission 2004-2009, Brevig Mission Local Economic Development 2007-2012, Brevig Mission Local Economic Development Plan 2013-2018, Erosion Exposure Assessment - Brevig Mission 2021, Brevig Mission Land Use and Capital Plan 2003, Pre-construction Cultural Resource Survey of the Airport Expansion Project 1980, Economic Value of Subsistence Activity 2011
Diomede	Bering Strait REAA	Economic Value of Subsistence Activity 2011, Final Interim Feasibility Report 2014, A Local Economic Development Plan for Diomede 1999, A Local Economic Development Plan for Diomede 2003, A Local Economic Development Plan for Diomede 2009 Updated Priorities, Diomede Local Economic Development Plan 2012-2017, Long Range Transportation Plan and Tribal Safety Management Plan, Inaliq Hazardous Waste Management and Education Project, Erosion Information Paper - Diomede, Alaska, Navigation Improvement Technical Report: Diomede, Alaska 1994
Elim	Bering Strait REAA	Local Economic Development Plan for Elim 2005-2010, Elim Local Economic Development Plan 2012-2017, Elim Subsistence Harbor Feasibility Study 2020, 2017 USACE Floodplain Manager's Report, Elim Hazard Impact Assessment 2012, Integrated Feasibility Report and Environmental Assessment 2020, Long Range Transportation Plan and Tribal Safety Management Plan
Gambell	Bering Strait REAA	2017 USACE Floodplain Manager's Report, small Community Emergency Response Plan 2020, Alaska Baseline Erosion Assessment 2008, Community Strategic Development Plan for Gambell 2004-2009, Gambell Local Economic Development Plan 2012-2017, Long Range Transportation Plan and Tribal Safety Management Plan
Golovin	Bering Strait REAA	A Local Economic Development Plan for Golovin 2004-2009, Golovin Local Economic Development Plan 2009-2013, Golovin Local Economic Development Plan 2014-2019, Long Range Transportation Plan and Tribal Safety Management Plan
Koyuk	Bering Strait REAA	2017 USACE Floodplain Manager's Report, A Local Economic Development Plan for Koyuk 1998, Local Economic Development Plan Koyuk 2005-2010, Local Economic Development Plan 2012-2017, Long Range Transportation Plan and Tribal Safety Management Plan
Nome	Bering Strait REAA	A Local Economic Development Plan for King Island - 1999, King Island Local Economic Development Plan 2010-2014, King Island Local Economic Development Plan 2014-2019, Village of Solomon Affordable Housing Program Strategic Plan 2022-2023, A Local Economic Development Plan for Solomon 1998, Village of Solomon Local Economic Development Plan 2016-2020, Village of Solomon Local Economic Development Plan 2021-2026
Savoonga	Bering Strait REAA	Community Strategic Development Plan for Savoonga 2004-2009, Savoonga Local Economic Development Plan 2009-2013
Shaktoolik	Bering Strait REAA	Shaktoolik Strategic Management Plan september 2016, Shaktoolik, Alaska: Climate Change Adaptation for an At-Risk Community Adaptation Plan 2014, A Local Economic Development Plan for Shaktoolik 2004-2009, Shaktoolik Local Economic Development Plan 2006-2011, Shaktoolik Local Economic Development Plan 2013-2018
Shishmaref	Bering Strait REAA	Shishmaref Strategic Management Plan 2016, Shishmaref Local Economic Development Plan 2004-2009
St. Michael	Bering Strait REAA	2017 USACE Floodplain Manager's Report, Local Economic Development Plan Saint Michael 2005-2010, St. Michael Local Economic Development Plan 2011-2015, Erosion Exposure Assessment - St. Michael 2021, Long Range Transportation Plan and Tribal Safety Management Plan
Stebbins	Bering Strait REAA	Stebbins Comprehensive Plan 2012, Local Economic Development Plan Stebbins 2005-2010

Locality	REAA	Other Plans, excluding Hazard Mitigation Plans (which can be found in Section 2.7.3)
Teller	Bering Strait REAA	Teller Local Economic Development Plan 2006-2010, Teller Local Economic Development Plan 2013-2018, Long Range Transportation Plan and Tribal Safety Management Plan
Unalakleet	Bering Strait REAA	City of Unalakleet Foothills Subdivision Master Plan 2011, Unalakleet Comprehensive Plan, Unalakleet Erosion Control Project, Unalakleet Local Economic Development Plan 2009-2013, Unalakleet Local Economic Development Plan 2014-2019, Long Range Transportation Plan and Tribal Safety Management Plan
Wales	Bering Strait REAA	High-Penetration Wind-Diesel Hybrid Power System Technical Report May 2002, Local Economic Development Plan for Wales 2004-2009, Wales Local Economic Development Plan 2011-2016, Long Range Transportation Plan and Tribal Safety Management Plan
White Mountain	Bering Strait REAA	Community Strategic Development Plan for White Mountain 2004-2024, White Mountain Local Economic Development Plan 2008-2012, White Mountain Local Economic Development Plan 2013-2018, Strategic Business Plan 1982
Alakanuk	Lower Yukon REAA	City of Alakanuk Hazard Mitigation Plan 2007, City of Alakanuk Hazard Mitigation Plan 2012, City of Alakanuk Local Hazard Mitigation 2018 Plan Update
Emmonak	Lower Yukon REAA	Business Plan for Emmonak Equipment Leasing 2001, Local Hazards Mitigation Plan 2008, Local Hazards Mitigation Plan 2014
Kotlik	Lower Yukon REAA	Kotlik Comprehensive Economic Development Strategic Plan 2004, Hazard Mitigation Plan 2007, Community Development Plan 2008, Community Development Plan 2010, Local Hazard Mitigation Plan 2013
Marshall	Lower Yukon REAA	Marshall Airport Improvements - Finding of No Significant Impact 2023
Mountain Village	Lower Yukon REAA	Mountain Village Comprehensive Development Plan 1971, Mountain Village Land Use Plan 1987, 2002 Comprehensive Community Economic Development Plan for the City of Mountain Village, Alaska
Numan Iqua	Lower Yukon REAA	Feasibility Study for the Construction of a Traffic Conveyance Structure Across Swan Lake 2002, Nunam Iqua Strategic Plan For Comprehensive Community Development 2005, Hazard Mitigation Plan 2008
Pilot Station	Lower Yukon REAA	Pilot Station Community Development Plan 2006, Pilot Station Community Development Plan 2009, The City of Pilot Station Hazard Mitigation Plan 2010
Russian Mission	Lower Yukon REAA	Russian Mission Overall Economic Development Plan 1999, Russian Mission Community Plan 2006, Russian Mission Community Plan 2010
Scammon Bay	Lower Yukon REAA	Erosion Exposure Assessment - Scammon Bay 2021, Coastal Report - Scammon Bay Airport Improvements Feasibility Study 2022
Hooper Bay	Lower Yukon REAA	Hooper Bay Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Plan 2004, Hooper Bay Community Plan 2006, Local Hazards Mitigation Plan 2007
Pitka's Point	Lower Yukon REAA	Closeout Report for St. Mary's/Pitka's Point Wind Construction 2020
Chevak	Kashunamiut REAA	Chevak Community Plan 2007, Chevak Community Plan 2009, Chevak, Alaska Hazard Mitigation Plan 2011
Tununak	Lower Kuskokwim REAA	Tununak Traditional Council Strategic Planning Follow-up 1997, Erosion Information Paper - Tununak, Alaska 2008
Toksook Bay	Lower Kuskokwim REAA	Toksook Bay Community Plan 2008, Erosion Exposure Assessment - Toksook Bay 2021
Mekoryuk	Lower Kuskokwim REAA	Mekoryuk Comprehensive Plan 1993, Erosion Information Paper - Mekoryuk, Alaska 2008

Locality	REAA	Other Plans, excluding Hazard Mitigation Plans (which can be found in Section 2.7.3)
Nightmute	Lower Kuskokwim REAA	Nightmute Traditional Council Action Plan 2004, Erosion Information Paper - Nightmute, Alaska 2008
Bethel	Lower Kuskokwim REAA	Bethel Comprehensive Plan 1969, City of Bethel Comprehensive Plan 1980, City of Bethel Comprehensive Plan 1997, City of Bethel and ONC Community Economic Development Strategy Plan 2003, Local Hazards Mitigation Plan 2008
Chefornak	Lower Kuskokwim REAA	City of Chefornak Hazard Mitigation Plan 2014, Erosion Information Paper - Chefornak, Alaska 2008, Erosion Exposure Assessment - Chefornak 2021
Eek	Lower Kuskokwim REAA	Eek Community Comprehensive Plan 2004, Erosion Information Paper - Eek, Alaska 2007
Goodnews Bay	Lower Kuskokwim REAA	Goodnews Bay Community Plan 2005, Erosion Exposure Assessment - Goodnews Bay 2021, CIAP WEAR Trip Report Goodnews Bay 2013
Kasigluk	Lower Kuskokwim REAA	Systems Performance Analyses of Alaska Wind-Diesel Projects 2008
Kipnuk	Lower Kuskokwim REAA	Native Village of Kipnuk Hazard Mitigation Plan 2013, Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Update 2018, Kipnuk Community Erosion Assessment 2009, Kipnuk Hazard Impact Assessment 2011
Kongiganak	Lower Kuskokwim REAA	Native Village of Kongiganak Hazard Mitigation Plan 2015, Kongiganak Village Survey Report 2023
Kwethluk	Lower Kuskokwim REAA	Comprehensive Community Long Range Plan 1998-2003, Economic Development Plan 2000-2004, Community Erosion Assessment 2009
Kwigillingok	Lower Kuskokwim REAA	Erosion Exposure Assessment - Kwigillingok 2021, Kwigillingok: Community Profile 2015
Napakiak	Lower Kuskokwim REAA	Napakiak 5-Year Community Comprehensive Plan 2006, Napakiak Community Plan 2010, Local Hazard Mitigation Plan 2011, Napakiak Community Plan 2014, Local Hazard Mitigation Plan 2018, Napakiak Community Plan 2018, Napakiak Managed Retreat Plan 2020
Napaskiak	Lower Kuskokwim REAA	Overall Community and Economic Development Plan 2000
Nunapitchuk	Lower Kuskokwim REAA	Erosion Information Paper - Nunapitchuk, Alaska 2007
Oscarville	Lower Kuskokwim REAA	Oscarville Tribal Climate Adaptation Plan 2019
Platinum	Lower Kuskokwim REAA	
Quinhagak	Lower Kuskokwim REAA	Quinhagak Community Development Plan 2008, Quinhagak Community Development Plan 2010, City of Quinhagak Hazard Mitigation Plan 2012, Erosion Exposure Assessment - Quinhagak 2021
Tuntutuliak	Lower Kuskokwim REAA	Tuntutuliak Village End Use Energy Efficiency Measures Program Final Report, Tuntutuliak Airport Layout Plan 2019
Atmautluak	Lower Kuskokwim REAA	Atmautluak Hazard Impact Assessment 2010, Atmautluak Hydrological Study and Community Drainage Plan 2016, Atmautluak Energy Action Plan Final Report 2019
Newtok/Mertarvik	Lower Kuskokwim REAA	Mertarvik Community Layout Plan 2008, Mertarvik Community Layout Plan 2011, Strategic Management Plan Background Report Newtok to Mertarvik 2012, Newtok Village Tribal Hazard Mitigation Plan Update 2015, Newtok-Mertarvik Relocation Energy Master Plan 2017, Mertarvik Housing Master Plan 2017
Akiachak	Yupit REAA	Akiachak Energy Efficiency Project 2022 Status Report, Akiachak Energy Efficiency Project 2023 Status Report, Akiachak Energy Efficiency Project 2024 Status Report

Locality	REAA	Other Plans, excluding Hazard Mitigation Plans (which can be found in Section 2.7.3)
Akiak	Yupit REAA	City of Akiak Hazard Mitigation Plan 2013, Local Hazard Mitigation Plan 2022, Akiak Water and Sewer Service Preliminary Engineering Report 2018, Akiak Environmental Assessment - Short Term Response 2020
Tuluksak	Yupit REAA	Tuluksak Economic Profile and Overall Economic Development Plan 1993
Saint George	Pribilof Islands REAA	Comprehensive Development Plan 1988, St. George Traditional Council Strategic Plan 2006, Saint George Community Strategic Plan 2007, St. George Harbor Improvement Feasibility Study 2020, St. George Tribal Council Local Economic Development Plan
Saint Paul	Pribilof Islands REAA	Ataqan Akun Community Plan 1995, ST. Paul Island 5-Year Economic Development Strategy 1999, Local Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan 2008, Hazard Mitigation Plan 2016, City of Saint Paul Strategic Plan: 2021-2023

5.7. Standard Form 424

The final submission of the CDBG-DR Action Plan to HUD will include a completed and executed Federal Form SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance).

5.8 Public Comments Submitted

An attachment of full public comment with the State’s responses to each comment is included on the following pages. If the action plan was updated in response to public comments, these are noted with the comment when applicable.

This comment tracker summarizes all public comments received during the Typhoon Merbok CDBG-DR Action Plan Public Review Draft Comment Period, August 25 through September 24, 2025 and corresponding responses from the State of Alaska Division of Community and Regional Affairs (DCRA) Action Plan project team. In some cases, individual comments were divided into multiple entries to clarify the location, topic, or plan component addressed. In reviewing and responding to public comments, the project team considered all inputs used to develop the Public Review Draft Action Plan. As explained in project team responses, some public comments resulted in modifications to the Action Plan, others did not; rationale is provided in either instance.

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
1	9/10	Council received funding to repair 105 houses (on north side of Chevak). A majority of the houses on the south side of Chevak, most of them did not sign up for that funding.	Public Hearing	Charlotte Layagak	Chevak	The remaining Chevak housing recovery need is noted Unmet Disaster Recovery Needs Assessment that will inform Substantial Amendment #1.
2	9/10	In the Northside homes the leveling is getting worse from Merbok and climate change. It is also happening in other villages. Wind blows through their homes and they are using so much heating oil and electricity, bills are so high.	Public Hearing	Charlotte Layagak	Chevak	The impacts to household energy costs are noted and will be included in the Unmet Disaster Recovery Needs Assessment that will inform Substantial Amendment #1.
3	9/10	been working DCRA to bring funding requests together, but don't know where these stand now or what they are for – rehabilitation or what. Would like to know where the City's funding request stands?	Public Hearing	Raymond	Alakanuk	Does not include a suggested revision to plan or process.
4	9/10	[needs to learn more about the unmet needs in the community and will call with questions]	Public Hearing	Cevia	Alakanuk	Does not include a suggested revision to plan or process.

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
5	9/10	just became aware of this hearing this morning from someone working with the Native Village. There was shoreline damage in Unalakleet at the barge landing site owned by the village. How do we find out about funding to repair that barge landing site? It was damaged during Merbok storm.	Public Hearing	Mark Johnson	Unalakleet Unalakleet Native Corporation	<p>The State of Alaska met HUD’s requirements for public engagement during the Public Review Draft period. Unfortunately, the timeline for this Action Plan did not allow for engagement efforts beyond the minimum requirements. However, additional opportunities for public input will be available when a Substantial Amendment is published, which will include a longer comment period.</p> <p>The Unalakleet barge landing damage will be included in the Unmet Disaster Recovery Needs Assessment that will inform Substantial Amendment #1.</p>
6	9/22	We are connected with several Tribal communities, and other organizations that were not fully aware of this public comment period. We ask that the state please extend this deadline on this important comment period.	Email	Susan Gadamus	Alaska Institute for Justice	<p>The State of Alaska met HUD’s requirements for public engagement during the Public Review Draft period. Unfortunately, the timeline for this Action Plan did not allow for engagement efforts beyond the minimum requirements. However, additional opportunities for public input will be available when a Substantial Amendment is published, which will include a longer comment period.</p>

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
7	9/22	We also note that many individuals in these communities, including leadership, do not speak English as their first language. That language barrier makes the short deadline, for a very technical document, even more of a challenge.	Email	Susan Gadamus	Alaska Institute for Justice	The State of Alaska met HUD’s requirements for public engagement during the Public Review Draft period. Unfortunately, the timeline for this Action Plan did not allow for engagement efforts beyond the minimum requirements. However, additional opportunities for public input will be available when a Substantial Amendment is published, which will include a longer comment period.

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
8	9/19	<p>I am writing to ask that the agency issue an extension on the comment period for the Draft Typhoon Merbok Action Recovery Plan. My organization, Alaska Institute for Justice, found out about this comment opportunity only in the last week. We also partner with Tribes that are in several of the communities that were affected by Merbok and that would be affected by the proposed plan for distributing the CDBG-DR funds. Several of these communities have expressed to us their interest in commenting but we are concerned there is not enough time left in the comment period for them, and us, to coordinate thoughtful comments. Is there any way for the Division to grant the public an extension to submit comments? If there is another channel we can use to request an extension, please let me know.</p>	Email	Susan Gadamus	Alaska Institute for Justice	<p>The State of Alaska met HUD’s requirements for public engagement during the Public Review Draft period. Unfortunately, the timeline for this Action Plan did not allow for engagement efforts beyond the minimum requirements. However, additional opportunities for public input will be available when a Substantial Amendment is published, which will include a longer comment period.</p>

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
9	9/22	The Alaska Municipal League (AML), on behalf of local governments across the state, appreciates the opportunity to comment on the 2025 Public Review Draft Action Plan for the Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funds responding to Typhoon Merbok (FEMA DR-4672). Typhoon Merbok devastated approximately 40 rural communities along Alaska’s western coast in 2022, most of which are remote Alaska Native villages facing long-standing challenges.	Email		Alaska Municipal League	Does not include a suggested revision to plan or process.

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
10	9/22	We commend the State’s efforts to craft a recovery plan and broadly support the plan’s focus on housing and mitigation, given the extreme pre-disaster deficits in housing and the growing climate threats. At the same time, we offer the following comments and recommendations to ensure the Action Plan is equitable, feasible, and responsive to local needs. Our feedback evaluates specific proposed actions in housing, infrastructure, mitigation, planning, and capacity building, and identifies opportunities and concerns from the perspective of municipalities.	Email		Alaska Municipal League	Does not include a suggested revision to plan or process.
11	9/22	We emphasize the importance of equitable funding distribution, local capacity constraints, implementation feasibility, and respect for self-governance and local priorities in the recovery process.	Email		Alaska Municipal League	Does not include a suggested revision to plan or process.

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
12	9/22	<p>We strongly agree that housing recovery should be the top priority. The plan allocates \$25.8 million (65% of the CDBG-DR funds) toward housing programs, the largest share of the \$38.49 million grant. This emphasis is appropriate given the severity of the housing crisis in the affected regions. Even before the disaster, communities in the impacted Regional Educational Attendance Areas (REAs) suffered extreme overcrowding and housing shortages, with an estimated 2,932 new units or major rehabs needed to address immediate pre-disaster housing needs (a \$1.94 billion problem). Typhoon Merbok exacerbated these challenges by damaging homes and displacing families.</p>	Email		Alaska Municipal League	Does not include a suggested revision to plan or process.

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
13	9/22	The Draft Action Plan rightly notes that in some of the hardest-hit areas (e.g. the Yukon–Kuskokwim Delta), over 43% of households were overcrowded, and in certain villages such as St. Michael, over 60% of households were overcrowded even before the storm. This context underscores that housing investments will not only repair disaster damage but also improve long-term living conditions and community resilience.	Email		Alaska Municipal League	Does not include a suggested revision to plan or process.
14	9/22	Housing Program Design and Equity: The proposed Western Alaska Housing Recovery Program must be designed to effectively reach those most in need. We applaud the plan’s intention to “restore, protect, and strengthen housing in impacted communities” and to address both urgent repair needs and long-term housing stability. We stress the following points for program design.	Email		Alaska Municipal League	Does not include a suggested revision to plan or process.

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
15	9/22	<p>[Housing Program Design and Equity] Prioritize Impacted Households and Overcrowding: CDBG-DR housing assistance should first serve households that suffered direct damage from Typhoon Merbok or were displaced. Within this group, consider prioritizing those who were already in overcrowded or substandard homes pre-disaster. By targeting resources in this way, the program can reduce future displacement risk and alleviate chronic overcrowding. We note that the plan identifies only about \$3.1 million in “remaining unmet” housing needs directly from the disaster, which implies that traditional assistance (FEMA Individual Assistance, State programs, etc.) left a modest funding gap for home repairs.</p>	Email		Alaska Municipal League	<p>The Action Plan is based on the best currently available data; it states that estimated unmet recovery need for housing only accounts for homes documented by State and Federal assistance programs (Section 2.4), and notes that not all homeowners impacted by the Typhoon completed applications for recovery assistance, as documented in joint State/Federal reports (Section 4.10). Following submission of this Action Plan, DCRA will conduct a survey of impacted communities (see Citizen Participation, Section 3.2) and refine the Unmet Recovery Needs Assessment to better reflect the unmet needs that were not previously documented. This information will be incorporated into a Substantial Amendment in 2026.</p>

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
16	9/22	[Housing Program Design and Equity] However, many families likely did not receive adequate aid due to application barriers (discussed below) or because their homes were not covered (e.g. subsistence cabins). The housing program should therefore remain flexible to assist any disaster-affected household that still needs help, even if their damages were not fully captured in initial estimates.	Email		Alaska Municipal League	The Action Plan is based on the best currently available data; it states that estimated unmet recovery need for housing only accounts for homes documented by State and Federal assistance programs (Section 2.4), and notes that not all homeowners impacted by the Typhoon completed applications for recovery assistance, as documented in joint State/Federal reports (Section 4.10). Following submission of this Action Plan, DCRA will conduct a survey of impacted communities (see Citizen Participation, Section 3.2) and refine the Unmet Recovery Needs Assessment to better reflect the unmet needs that were not previously documented. This information will be incorporated into a Substantial Amendment in 2026.

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
17	9/22	[Housing Program Design and Equity] Include Resilient Reconstruction and Relocation Options: We encourage the State to allow diverse housing recovery activities, including home repairs, elevation or flood-proofing, reconstruction of destroyed homes, and relocation of homes out of high-risk areas if necessary. Some villages may determine that rebuilding certain homes in-place is unsafe due to erosion or flood risk; in such cases, CDBG-DR funds could help relocate structures to safer ground or support land acquisition for new housing development on higher ground.	Email		Alaska Municipal League	Funding allocated to address unmet recovery need for housing is included in the Homeowner Recovery Program that can provide up to 77 eligible homeowners with up to \$200,000 toward for inspection and repair to homes damaged by Tyhpon Merbok, in addition to the New Housing Construction Program. All recipients of assistance funded by CDBG-DR funds must meet the CDBG-DR program requirements set by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
18	9/22	[Housing Program Design and Equity] . The plan’s section on preparedness and mitigation in housing (3.5.5) appropriately emphasizes incorporating resilience into housing projects. We support this and ask that new construction or repairs funded under this program be “built-back-better” – for example, using wind-resistant designs, elevating homes above flood levels, and ensuring foundations are suited for permafrost conditions. Building more resilient homes will protect residents and the substantial investment being made.	Email		Alaska Municipal League	Funding allocated to address unmet recovery need for housing is included in the Homeowner Recovery Program that can provide up to 77 eligible homeowners with up to \$200,000 toward for inspection and repair to homes damaged by Tyhpon Merbok, in addition to the New Housing Construction Program. All recipients of assistance funded by CDBG-DR funds must meet the CDBG-DR program requirements set by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
19	9/22	[Housing Program Design and Equity] Amend List of Eligible and Ineligible Activities: As currently written (4.10), the draft only allows for multifamily units, defined as five or more units per structure, to be built. This unfortunately does not consider cultural norms or the landscape of rural western Alaskan villages affected by this disaster. This could be rectified by removing or modifying that stipulation to allow for single residences. Many, if not most, single-family residences in this region house multiple generations and sometimes multiple families.	Email		Alaska Municipal League	Funding allocated to address unmet recovery need for housing is included in the Homeowner Recovery Program that can provide up to 77 eligible homeowners with up to \$200,000 toward for inspection and repair to homes damaged by Tyhpon Merbok, in addition to the New Housing Construction Program. All recipients of assistance funded by CDBG-DR funds must meet the CDBG-DR program requirements set by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
20	9/22	[Housing Program Design and Equity] Leverage Local Builders and Cultural Design: To the extent possible, recovery housing projects should engage local labor and regional housing authorities as partners. The Draft Action Plan notes that the State intends to coordinate with entities such as the Association of Village Council Presidents (AVCP) Regional Housing Authority and the Bering Strait Regional Housing Authority, which serve the affected Tribal communities. We fully support these partnerships.	Email		Alaska Municipal League	The comment is noted and will inform substantial amendment(s) to this plan.

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
21	9/22	[Housing Program Design and Equity] Local and Tribal housing organizations have deep experience building in remote Alaska and can help ensure that new housing is culturally appropriate (for example, housing designs that accommodate multigenerational families and space for subsistence harvesting gear). Likewise, employing local workers and contractors in rebuilding will build community capacity and keep economic benefits in the region. If capacity is limited, the program could provide training or apprenticeships so that local residents can participate in construction.	Email		Alaska Municipal League	The comment is noted and will inform substantial amendment(s) to this plan.

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
22	9/22	[Housing Program Design and Equity] Transparent and Fair Allocation of Housing Funds: The \$25.8 million for housing, while substantial, will not meet all needs, so a clear and equitable method for distributing this assistance is critical. We urge the State to develop transparent criteria for how housing aid will be awarded – balancing factors such as degree of damage, household income (since CDBG-DR must primarily benefit low- to moderate-income residents), household size, and vulnerability.	Email		Alaska Municipal League	The Action Plan notes that populations in the MID areas include disproportionately high shares of young children, individuals with disabilities, and elderly residents. It also notes that many elders live alone or in overcrowded households and face compounding risks such as water/sewer disruptions and threats to evacuation routes (see Section 2.2.5 Grantee Demographics and Disaster-impacted Populations). Section 4.10, Housing Program Details states that the program is designed to ensure that the housing needs of very-low, low- and moderate-income households and vulnerable populations, including individuals made homeless as a result of the disaster.

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
23	9/22	[Housing Program Design and Equity] Transparent and Fair Allocation of Housing Funds: Every affected REAA (Bering Strait, Kashunamiut, Lower Yukon, Lower Kuskokwim, Yupiit, and Pribilof Islands) should have the opportunity to benefit in proportion to its level of impact and need. We appreciate that the plan identifies those REAAs as the “most impacted and distressed” areas and the focus of the funds. Within and across communities, the distribution should ensure no group is left behind – including smaller villages that might lack grant-writing capacity or politically less visible communities.	Email		Alaska Municipal League	The Action Plan allocates 80% of the housing program funds for HUD-identified MIDs and 20% for State-identified MIDs to meet HUD program requirements (sections 4.1-3). The Public Review Draft Action Plan was updated to include two housing programs to spread housing funds among more communities (4.10). The Homeowner Recovery Program sets a uniform maximum per-home assistance equal to the 2022 SBA disaster home loan limit of \$200,000, which provides predictable, transparent awards regardless of community size. Housing programs are designed to meet very-low, low- and moderate-income needs and prioritize vulnerable populations, supporting equitable access for smaller villages. The New Single Family Housing Development Program was refined to include funding for housing construction in multiple communities in the MID areas.

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
24	9/22	[Housing Program Design and Equity] Transparent and Fair Allocation of Housing Funds: A formula-based allocation or needs-based tiering, developed in consultation with local leaders, could help ensure fairness. Additionally, we recommend the State provide regular public updates on how many homes have been repaired or built per community, to maintain transparency and trust throughout implementation.	Email		Alaska Municipal League	The Action Plan notes that consultation with local leaders will occur through the Citizen Engagement Plan, which includes an unmet needs survey, regional events, and regional meetings scheduled from September 2025 through April 2026. Delegates from each MID community will be nominated locally to participate, and these activities are structured to inform funding priorities and prepare for Substantial Amendment #1. The State also commits to transparency by publishing the Action Plan and subsequent Substantial Amendments on its public website, providing a 30-day public comment period, and making materials available in multiple languages with 508 compliance (Section 3.2). Regular reporting on program progress, including homes repaired or built, will be part of these updates to maintain transparency and accountability.

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
25	9/22	<p>[Infrastructure and Public Facilities Infrastructure Needs vs. Funding Allocation] Rebuilding critical infrastructure is essential for community recovery; many local governments are therefore concerned that the Draft Action Plan allocates no CDBG-DR funds to infrastructure projects. According to Table 1 of the plan, an estimated \$46 million in “remaining unmet need” for infrastructure (e.g. for roads, airports, utilities, public buildings) was identified post-Merbok – this represents 66.6% of all unmet recovery needs by dollar value.</p>	Email		Alaska Municipal League	<p>With limited CDBG-DR funds relative to need, the Action Plan prioritizes housing because pre-disaster housing unmet need in MID areas exceeds \$1.9 billion and was exacerbated by Merbok, while FEMA PA and State match address most restoration of public facilities (Section 4.3). The Action Plan does fund infrastructure mitigation, proposing \$5,021,000 for a Flood and Erosion Infrastructure/Mitigation program to reduce future risk, while reserving housing as the largest share at \$25,773,400 (Section 4.2). These priorities may be modified in future substantial amendment(s). To ensure fairness and allow re-prioritization, the Citizen Engagement Plan includes an unmet-needs survey and regional meetings with locally nominated delegates to inform Substantial Amendment #1 (Section 3.2).</p>

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
26	9/22	[Infrastructure and Public Facilities] Yet the plan proposes \$0 (0%) of the CDBG-DR grant towards infrastructure restoration. We understand that FEMA Public Assistance and state funds are the primary source for infrastructure repairs. Indeed, as noted in the plan’s timeline, FEMA and the Alaska Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Management have obligated roughly \$109 million for infrastructure and public building repairs as of July 2024. This substantial investment (along with a \$10 million State Disaster Relief Fund match) will cover many damages to airports, clinics, schools, power lines, and other facilities.	Email		Alaska Municipal League	With limited CDBG-DR funds relative to need, the Action Plan prioritizes housing because pre-disaster housing unmet need in MID areas exceeds \$1.9 billion and was exacerbated by Merbok, while FEMA PA and State match address most restoration of public facilities (Section 4.3). The Action Plan does fund infrastructure mitigation, proposing \$5,021,000 for a Flood and Erosion Infrastructure/Mitigation program to reduce future risk, while reserving housing as the largest share at \$25,773,400 (Section 4.2). These priorities may be modified in future substantial amendment(s). To ensure fairness and allow re-prioritization, the Citizen Engagement Plan includes an unmet-needs survey and regional meetings with locally nominated delegates to inform Substantial Amendment #1 (Section 3.2).

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
27	9/22	[Infrastructure and Public Facilities Infrastructure Needs vs. Funding Allocation] However, exclusive reliance on FEMA funds may leave gaps in recovery. FEMA typically restores infrastructure to pre-disaster condition and may not fund certain enhancements or locally owned assets. We are concerned that some community-critical infrastructure needs could remain unmet without supplemental support.	Email		Alaska Municipal League	The Action Plan acknowledges that FEMA Public Assistance primarily restores infrastructure to pre-disaster condition, but also notes that additional unmet needs may remain. The plan commits to using CDBG-DR as a gap-filling resource once other sources are exhausted, and emphasizes that documenting these needs is important for leveraging other federal, state, and private programs. Section 4.4, Leveraging Funds, explains that CDBG-DR will be paired with FEMA, SBA, state match, and other programs to maximize benefit, and that projects maximizing outside funding will be prioritized. In addition, the plan specifies that remaining Tribal and local governments will be surveyed in 2025–2026 to identify additional unmet infrastructure needs and costs, creating a record that can be used to pursue supplemental funding (Section 2.6).

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
28	9/22	While we acknowledge the CDBG-DR allocation is limited, we urge the State to consider the following to address infrastructure needs and community facilities: Identify and Prioritize Critical Gaps: In coordination with local and Tribal governments, identify any infrastructure repairs or resilience improvements that FEMA Public Assistance did not fund or fully cover.	Email		Alaska Municipal League	The comment is noted and will inform substantial amendment(s) to this plan.

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
29	9/22	<p>This might include minor but essential facilities (e.g. community halls, subsistence storage freezers, small boat harbors, Tribal offices) or resilience features beyond FEMA’s scope (e.g. stronger erosion control than what FEMA will fund). If such gaps exist and are vital to a community’s recovery, the State should consider using a portion of CDBG-DR (either from the \$5.77 million planning funds or by reprogramming some housing funds, if feasible) to address them. Even a small set-aside could help a village repair a vital community-owned structure that fell through the cracks of other programs. The plan currently does not describe such a mechanism, and we believe adding it would greatly increase local confidence that no critical recovery need is overlooked.</p>	Email		Alaska Municipal League	<p>The comment is noted and will inform substantial amendment(s) to this plan.</p>

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
30	9/22	While we acknowledge the CDBG-DR allocation is limited, we urge the State to consider the following to address infrastructure needs and community facilities: Use CDBG-DR for Local Match or Resilience Upgrades: CDBG-DR funds are often eligible to serve as the non-federal cost share (match) for FEMA-funded projects or to augment projects for resiliency. We recommend explicitly allowing CDBG-DR to be used to match FEMA Public Assistance or Hazard Mitigation Grant Program projects (or other federal investments as allowable), where communities face difficulty covering their required match.	Email		Alaska Municipal League	Thus far, the State of Alaska has not used, and does not intend to use, CDBG-DR/CDBG-MIT funds to match the non-federal cost share for FEMA-funded Public Assistance projects. At this time, the State of Alaska is unaware of any FEMA-funded Public Assistance projects or Hazard Mitigation Projects requiring a federal match.
31	9/22	[Recommendations for Infrastructure Recovery, Use CDBG-DR for Local Match or Resilience Upgrades] . Additionally, as projects move into construction, some communities may want to “build back stronger” than FEMA’s replacement in order to withstand future storms – for example, by elevating a rebuilt airport runway or improving an evacuation road. CDBG-DR could fund these incremental improvements (which FEMA may deem ineligible) to ensure infrastructure is not just restored but made more sustainable.	Email		Alaska Municipal League	The Action Plan provides specificity about allowable planning activities in the Planning Program, which include Hazard Mitigation Plans for local jurisdictions within the HUD- and Grantee-identified Most Impacted and Distressed Areas, as well as a reimburseable support agreement with the State of Alaska Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHS&EM) for Hazard Mitigation Planning Review (Section 4.10).

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
32	9/22	<p>[Recommendations for Infrastructure Recovery, Use CDBG-DR for Local Match or Resilience Upgrades] The plan’s own mitigation assessment notes that conventional infrastructure in Western Alaska (e.g. roads built on permafrost) is often unsustainable and quickly deteriorates under current conditions. We have a unique opportunity to invest in long-term resilience as we rebuild. Even though the Draft Action Plan currently allocates 0% to infrastructure, we suggest it remain flexible – if higher-priority housing needs are met under budget or if additional CDBG-DR funds become available (through program income or future allocations), some resources could be redirected to critical infrastructure projects that strengthen communities for the future.</p>	Email		Alaska Municipal League	<p>The Action Plan acknowledges that many forms of conventional infrastructure in Western Alaska are vulnerable to erosion, flooding, and permafrost thaw, making long-term resilience a priority (Section 2.7). As noted in Section 3.4, Amendments, substantial amendments may be used to reallocate funds between programs or new activities. This comment will be documented for consideration in Substantial Amendment #1, where the State may revisit funding priorities if housing needs are met under budget, program income becomes available, or future CDBG-DR allocations are received.</p>

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
33	9/22	<p>The implementation of infrastructure repairs largely falls to federal and state disaster programs, but the success of those projects depends on local capacity to execute them. Many small municipalities and Tribes are struggling with the complexity of managing FEMA-funded projects. We encourage DCRA’s CDBG-DR team to coordinate closely with FEMA, state recovery officers, and local governments on infrastructure activities. The Action Plan’s leveraging strategy should articulate how CDBG-DR planning funds might support technical assistance or staffing to help local governments navigate the FEMA process (for example, hiring regional grant managers or engineers to support multiple villages). This would ensure infrastructure funds already obligated are fully utilized and projects completed on schedule. The end goal should be a seamless recovery effort where CDBG-DR housing programs and FEMA infrastructure projects together restore the fabric of these communities.</p>	Email		Alaska Municipal League	<p>The Action Plan emphasizes coordination with FEMA and state partners, noting that the Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development will work closely with the Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, FEMA’s counterpart in Alaska. The leveraging section highlights how CDBG-DR funds are designed to complement FEMA Public Assistance, Individual Assistance, and Hazard Mitigation Grant Program resources. The Action Plan reserves the full planning allocation to support local and regional planning and capacity-building activities. Eligible activities include policy planning, management, and technical studies such as hazard mitigation planning, flood and erosion assessments, and geotechnical studies. These resources can be deployed through regional entities that serve multiple villages, which provides a pathway for grant management and engineering support of the type you recommend. The Action Plan also commits to transparency and coordination during implementation by maintaining a public website with action plans, performance reports, program policies, and procurement updates, refreshed at least monthly.</p>

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
34	9/22	[Recommendations for Infrastructure Recovery, Coordination and Technical Assistance] We appreciate that the plan recognizes the need to “prioritize coordination with Tribal governments... and local service providers” in all recovery efforts. Extending this collaborative approach to infrastructure recovery will help align construction schedules, avoid duplication, and incorporate local input (e.g. ensuring that new housing is sited with regard to repaired roads or future protective berms).	Email		Alaska Municipal League	The Action Plan emphasizes the importance of coordination with Tribal governments and local service providers across all programs (Section 4.5).

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
35	9/22	<p>Mitigation, Resilience, and Subsistence Needs Dedicated Mitigation Funding: We are pleased to see the Draft Action Plan devote the full 15% mitigation set-aside (\$5.021 million) to forward-looking resilience initiatives. Climate change is already amplifying coastal storm impacts in Western Alaska, and Typhoon Merbok underscored the need for proactive measures. The plan’s Mitigation Needs Assessment identifies numerous hazards – erosion, permafrost thaw, flooding, severe winter storms – that threaten the long-term viability of communities. Investing even a small portion of recovery funds in mitigation will yield benefits by reducing future disaster losses. We note that the plan calculates roughly \$20 million in unmet mitigation needs (beyond what other agencies are doing). While \$5 million cannot address everything, it is a start. We support the focus on integrating mitigation into housing recovery (e.g. resilient design as mentioned above) and potentially funding stand-alone community mitigation projects.</p>	Email		Alaska Municipal League	<p>The Action Plan devotes the full 15 percent mitigation set-aside, or \$5.021 million, to forward-looking resilience initiatives, as required by HUD (Section 4.2). The Mitigation Needs Assessment documents significant hazards, including erosion, permafrost thaw, flooding, and severe winter storms, which underscore the importance of proactive investment (Section 2.7). The comment is noted, but no changes to the Action Plan are proposed at this time.</p>

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
36	9/22	<p>Focus on Community-Led Resilience Projects: We recommend that the \$5.021 million mitigation allocation be used as strategically as possible, prioritizing community-led projects that align with local hazard priorities. Many impacted communities have existing Tribal or local Hazard Mitigation Plans or are developing climate adaptation plans. The State’s 2023 Hazard Mitigation Plan update highlights the importance of supporting local and Tribal mitigation planning and implementation as a top priority. CDBG-DR funds could directly assist with some of these efforts. For example, funds might be granted to villages to implement “shovel-ready” mitigation actions from their local plans – such as reinforcing a eroding riverbank that threatens homes, elevating fuel tanks above flood height, or constructing evacuation roads and shelters. Nature-based solutions (dune restoration, re-vegetation of storm-damaged tundra, etc.) could also be eligible.</p>	Email		Alaska Municipal League	<p>With the extremely limited program budget of \$5.021 million relative to the need, the Flood and Erosion Mitigation Infrastructure Program (Section 4.10) is designed to be flexible in order to address priority mitigation needs. The Action Plan includes specificity about allowable planning activities in the Planning Program, which include Hazard Mitigation Plans for local jurisdictions within the HUD- and Grantee-identified Most Impacted and Distressed Areas (Section 4.10).</p>

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
37	9/22	Focus on Community-Led Resilience Projects: We also encourage exploring use of mitigation funds to kick-start relocation or protect-in-place initiatives for the most endangered communities. Even if wholesale village relocation is beyond the scope of this grant, supporting incremental steps – like planning higher-ground sites, building one or two demonstration homes on safe ground, or land acquisition – would align with long-term sustainability goals. The plan references ongoing Tribal-led relocation and protection-in-place initiatives and we urge continued support for these efforts.	Email		Alaska Municipal League	The Action Plan acknowledges Tribal-led relocation and protection-in-place initiatives as critical to long-term community sustainability (Section 2.7). While the \$5.021 million mitigation set-aside focuses on erosion and flood risk reduction (Section 4.2), the Planning Program also provides \$5.77 million that may support studies, hazard mitigation planning, and related activities such as evaluating higher-ground sites or developing relocation strategies (Section 4.10).

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
38	9/22	<p>Addressing Subsistence Impacts and Food Security: One area of concern that deserves more explicit attention in the Action Plan is the recovery of subsistence assets and livelihoods. The traditional hunting, fishing, and gathering activities are the backbone of the local economy and culture in Western Alaska, yet they were hit hard by Typhoon Merbok. The plan acknowledges that boats, fish camps, drying racks, and other subsistence equipment were damaged or lost during the storm – for instance, “In Chevak, 90% of fishing boats were lost”. Entire fish drying facilities and generational subsistence cabins were destroyed by the flooding. These losses are not fully captured in monetary damage estimates (indeed, the plan lists only \$7,500 of “unmet economic revitalization need”), but they have caused profound hardship.</p>	Email		Alaska Municipal League	<p>The Action Plan notes that Typhoon Merbok damaged subsistence assets such as boats, fish camps, drying racks, and cabins, and acknowledges that these losses are not fully reflected in current monetary estimates (Section 2.5). The unmet needs assessment reflects the best currently available data, and the plan identifies data gaps to be addressed through citizen engagement activities, including surveys and regional meetings (Section 3.2). These efforts will inform the preparation of Substantial Amendment #1 in 2026, which may refine allocations to better capture and respond to subsistence impacts.</p>

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
39	9/22	[Addressing Subsistence Impacts and Food Security] Communities reported that subsistence harvests declined noticeably in the years following Merbok, as saltwater inundation damaged berry patches and traditional plant areas, and critical equipment was missing. We appreciate that FEMA and the State made efforts to reimburse some individuals for subsistence gear through disaster assistance, but many impacted residents either did not apply or did not receive help for these losses. From a local perspective, restoring subsistence capacity is as important to recovery as rebuilding houses and roads.	Email		Alaska Municipal League	The Action Plan notes that Typhoon Merbok damaged subsistence assets such as boats, fish camps, drying racks, and cabins, and acknowledges that these losses are not fully reflected in current monetary estimates (Section 2.5). The unmet needs assessment reflects the best currently available data, and the plan identifies data gaps to be addressed through citizen engagement activities, including surveys and regional meetings (Section 3.2). These efforts will inform the preparation of Substantial Amendment #1 in 2026, which may refine allocations to better capture and respond to subsistence impacts.

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
40	9/22	<p>[Addressing Subsistence Impacts and Food Security] We recommend the Action Plan be strengthened to support subsistence recovery in the following ways: Incorporate Subsistence into Eligible Activities: Clarify that under the housing or economic revitalization categories (if reprogrammed), CDBG-DR funds may be used to assist eligible households or tribes with replacing essential subsistence assets lost in the disaster. For example, small grants or vouchers could help purchase fishing boats, motors, smokehouses, or other equipment for low-income subsistence harvesters who were not fully compensated by FEMA. Similarly, a community might use funds to rebuild a communal fish processing shed or cold storage that was destroyed.</p>	Email		Alaska Municipal League	<p>The Action Plan notes that Typhoon Merbok damaged subsistence assets such as boats, fish camps, drying racks, and cabins, and acknowledges that these losses are not fully reflected in current monetary estimates (Section 2.5). The unmet needs assessment reflects the best currently available data, and the plan identifies data gaps to be addressed through citizen engagement activities, including surveys and regional meetings (Section 3.2). These efforts will inform the preparation of Substantial Amendment #1 in 2026, which may refine allocations to better capture and respond to subsistence impacts.</p>

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
41	9/22	[Addressing Subsistence Impacts and Food Security, Incorporate Subsistence into Eligible Activities] These activities could be justified as supporting food security and the local economy in predominantly subsistence-based communities. Even if not explicitly categorized in HUD’s typical funding lines, we urge flexibility and creativity to address this need. At minimum, the plan should acknowledge subsistence recovery as a local priority and commit to working with Tribes and agencies (e.g. Bureau of Indian Affairs, USDA, or Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game) to find resources to replace what was lost.	Email		Alaska Municipal League	The Action Plan notes subsistence as a local priority in the Economic Revitalization Unmet Recovery Needs Assessment (Section 2.5). Additional concerns will be considered through planned public engagement activities (see Citizen Participation, Section 3.2) to inform the Substantial Amendment #1. The Action Plan was revised to include the following language: Section 2.5, pp 66. " To address remaining data gaps, the State will document additional subsistence-related unmet needs and costs through the citizen engagement activities described in Section 3.2, use those findings to inform program design and, if warranted, adjustments to allocations through a future Substantial Amendment per Section 3.4."

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
42	9/22	<p>[Addressing Subsistence Impacts and Food Security] Mitigation Projects to Protect Subsistence Resources: When selecting projects for the \$5 million mitigation funding, give weight to those that directly safeguard subsistence activities. For instance, a flood mitigation project that prevents saltwater intrusion into berry patches, or a riverbank stabilization that protects a salmon drying area, would have economic and cultural co-benefits. Another idea raised by communities is improving energy resilience to protect food freezers – several villages (like Koyuk) suffered lengthy power outages after the storm, causing subsistence food spoilage. Installing backup renewable power sources or community freezers with backup generators could be a smart use of mitigation money, combining infrastructure resilience with food security. These kinds of projects may not traditionally be funded by FEMA, so CDBG-DR offers a valuable tool to fill that gap.</p>	Email		Alaska Municipal League	<p>The Action Plan notes that Typhoon Merbok damaged subsistence assets such as boats, fish camps, drying racks, and cabins, and acknowledges that these losses are not fully reflected in current monetary estimates (Section 2.5). The unmet needs assessment reflects the best currently available data, and the plan identifies data gaps to be addressed through citizen engagement activities, including surveys and regional meetings (Section 3.2). These efforts will inform the preparation of Substantial Amendment #1 in 2026, which may refine allocations to better capture and respond to subsistence impacts.</p>

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
43	9/22	[Addressing Subsistence Impacts and Food Security, Mitigation Projects to Protect Subsistence Resources] We urge the State to consult with Tribal councils and local leaders on mitigation proposals to ensure they address on-the-ground needs (for example, dust control on roads to prevent subsistence food contamination or protecting water sources). By funding some community-driven projects now, the Action Plan can leave a legacy of strengthening the subsistence lifestyle against future disruptions.	Email		Alaska Municipal League	The Action Plan notes that Typhoon Merbok damaged subsistence assets such as boats, fish camps, drying racks, and cabins, and acknowledges that these losses are not fully reflected in current monetary estimates (Section 2.5). The unmet needs assessment reflects the best currently available data, and the plan identifies data gaps to be addressed through citizen engagement activities, including surveys and regional meetings (Section 3.2). These efforts will inform the preparation of Substantial Amendment #1 in 2026, which may refine allocations to better capture and respond to subsistence impacts.
44	9/22	Monitoring Long-Term Sustainability: We suggest the program include metrics or follow-up to monitor how the recovery efforts impact subsistence practices over time. For example, tracking whether fish catch or berry harvest levels return to normal in a few years, or whether the provided housing and infrastructure improvements reduce the vulnerability of subsistence activities. This will help evaluate the long-term sustainability aspect of recovery. It will also hold agencies accountable to the promise of a recovery that respects and restores the ways of life of local communities.	Email		Alaska Municipal League	The State of Alaska tracks metrics associated with the number of households relocated, and the number of houses rehabilitated, reconstructed, or constructed with CDBG-DR funds for this program.

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
45	9/22	Capacity Constraints Acknowledged in Plan: We greatly appreciate that the Draft Action Plan recognizes the capacity challenges faced by local governments and Tribal organizations in the disaster recovery process. The plan candidly notes that the Typhoon Merbok recovery saw a “notable lack of applicants” for FEMA Individual Assistance and SBA loans, reflecting systemic access issues in our rural communities. Many of our small city and Tribal governments “lack staff with the skills, knowledge, and dedicated job responsibilities to help individuals apply for and successfully receive assistance”. This situation led to under-utilization of available aid, and it underscores why building local capacity is vital.	Email		Alaska Municipal League	The Action Plan acknowledges the capacity challenges faced by local governments and Tribal organizations, noting the lack of applicants for FEMA Individual Assistance and SBA loans and the resulting under-utilization of available aid (Section 2.2.4). The State recognizes these systemic access issues in rural communities and the importance of building local capacity.
46	9/22	[Capacity Constraints Acknowledged in Plan] We strongly concur with the plan’s stated strategies to reduce barriers – offering translation services, ADA-accessible applications, and culturally appropriate outreach in Alaska Native languages. We also commend the commitment to coordinate with Tribal governments, regional housing authorities, and local service providers to ensure equitable access to recovery programs. These principles should carry through into concrete actions during implementation.	Email		Alaska Municipal League	The Action Plan includes strategies to reduce barriers such as translation services, ADA-accessible applications, and culturally appropriate outreach in Alaska Native languages, along with coordination with Tribal governments, regional housing authorities, and local service providers (Section 3.2).

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
47	9/22	Use of Planning Funds (15%) for Capacity Building: Out of the CDBG-DR grant, \$5.77 million (15%) is allocated to planning and administrative activities. We urge the State to devote a significant portion of these planning funds to directly build capacity at the local and regional level. Doing so will not only help maximize the impact of CDBG-DR funds, but also leave communities better prepared for the future. Key recommendations include [the following].	Email		Alaska Municipal League	The Action Plan allocates \$5.77 million (15 percent) to planning activities, which may include capacity building for local and regional entities (Section 4.10).

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48	9/22	<p>Establish a robust technical assistance program that can help local governments and Tribes navigate the complexities of CDBG-DR and other recovery funding. This could involve deploying field staff or contracted experts to work one-on-one with communities in the Y-K Delta, Bering Strait region, and other affected areas. For example, Recovery Navigators or grant specialists could assist each community with tasks such as identifying eligible projects, completing environmental review and paperwork, managing contractors, and ensuring compliance with federal requirements. By embedding this support, we address the reality that small communities cannot easily add staff for grant administration. The plan’s identification of this need is excellent; now it should be met with a funded program. AML and regional organizations (like AVCP or Kawerak) could be partners in hosting such technical assistance centers, given their existing relationships and knowledge of local context.</p>	Email		Alaska Municipal League	<p>The Action Plan identifies the need for technical assistance to help local governments and Tribes navigate recovery funding and federal compliance requirements (Section 2.2.4). Specific and eligible training or technical support opportunities can be identified through the planned outreach and engagement activities described in Section 3.2 Citizen Participation and may be incorporated into program implementation or may inform the preparation of Substantial Amendment #1. The comment is noted, but no changes to the Action Plan are proposed at this time.</p>

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
49	9/22	<p>[Use of Planning Funds (15%) for Capacity Building] Training and Workforce Development: We recommend funding targeted trainings, workshops, and peer exchanges for local and Tribal officials on disaster recovery grant management, financial reporting, construction management, and mitigation planning. Building local expertise is an investment that will pay off long-term, as communities will be more self-reliant in future emergencies. Trainings should be delivered in accessible formats (including in-region and virtual options) and could cover HUD CDBG-DR rules, project scoping, procurement best practices, etc. Moreover, encouraging communities to share lessons among themselves (for instance, how one village managed a housing project) can foster collective learning. The planning funds can support development of toolkits and templates to further ease the administrative burden on local staff.</p>	Email		Alaska Municipal League	<p>The Action Plan identifies the need for technical assistance to help local governments and Tribes navigate recovery funding and federal compliance requirements (Section 2.2.4). Specific and eligible training or technical support opportunities can be identified through the planned outreach and engagement activities described in Section 3.2 Citizen Participation and may be incorporated into program implementation or may inform the preparation of Substantial Amendment #1. The comment is noted, but no changes to the Action Plan are proposed at this time.</p>

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
50	9/22	<p>[Use of Planning Funds (15%) for Capacity Building, Community Planning and Hazard Mitigation Updates] The Draft Action Plan identifies that 49 of 56 impacted communities have local hazard mitigation plans on file. It would be beneficial to use planning funds to update or expand these local plans in light of Typhoon Merbok’s lessons. Many of the impacted villages might wish to revise their priorities (for example, adding a seawall project or relocation feasibility study that became urgent after Merbok). Similarly, comprehensive community development plans could be updated to incorporate disaster resilience and climate adaptation strategies.</p>	Email		Alaska Municipal League	<p>The Action Plan includes specificity about allowable planning activities in the Planning Program, which include Hazard Mitigation Plans for local jurisdictions within the HUD- and Grantee-identified Most Impacted and Distressed Areas, as well as a reimbursable support agreement with the State of Alaska Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHS&EM) for Hazard Mitigation Planning Review (Section 4.10). Updating comprehensive community development plans to include disaster resilience and climate adaptation strategies are also eligible uses of Planning Program funding.</p>

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
51	9/22	<p>[Use of Planning Funds (15%) for Capacity Building, Community Planning and Hazard Mitigation Updates] Funding could be provided for each REAA or tribe to undertake a Community Recovery Plan that dovetails with this Action Plan, thereby aligning local priorities with funding opportunities. This planning should respect self-governance – meaning each Tribal government or city government leads the vision for its own recovery, with the State in a supporting role. We suggest that any state-led regional planning efforts (such as the FEMA-supported Interagency Recovery Coordination work) actively include local representatives at every stage. Planning outcomes should not be top-down, but rather a synthesis of local priorities into actionable projects.</p>	Email		Alaska Municipal League	<p>The Action Plan allocates \$5.77 million (15 percent) to planning activities, which may include community recovery plans, hazard mitigation updates, and related studies that align local priorities with recovery funding opportunities (Section 4.10). The comment is noted, but no changes to the Action Plan are proposed at this time.</p>

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
52	9/22	<p>[Use of Planning Funds (15%) for Capacity Building] Culturally Appropriate Outreach and Application Processes: When the housing and mitigation programs are rolled out, ensure the application and participation processes are user-friendly for rural Alaska residents. This may mean providing in-person intake in each community, translating materials into Yup’ik, Inupiaq, Siberian Yupik, and other languages as needed, and coordinating with Tribal councils to get the word out. The plan’s commitment to “offering translation services [and] culturally appropriate outreach in Alaska Native languages” is exactly on point. We encourage the State to partner with Tribal liaisons or local NGOs to carry this out. Additionally, simplifying documentation requirements (within federal allowable limits) will help, as many elders and subsistence families have difficulty producing paperwork that mainstream programs require.</p>	Email		Alaska Municipal League	The comment is noted and will inform substantial amendment(s) to this plan.

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
53	9/22	Ongoing Consultation and Communication: Lastly, we emphasize the importance of continuous engagement with local and Tribal stakeholders throughout the CDBG-DR implementation. The public comment period is a good start, but recovery will span multiple years. We recommend forming a Local Advisory Committee or working group (including AML, Tribal representatives, and regional entities) to meet regularly with the State project team. This would allow two-way feedback as programs progress – for instance, if a certain rule is hindering participation, or if new needs arise (such as another disaster event).	Email		Alaska Municipal League	The comment is noted and will inform substantial amendment(s) to this plan.

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
54	9/22	<p>Such a feedback loop will enable the State to adjust program design in real time and ensure the funds are used in the most impactful way. It also demonstrates respect for self-governance by giving local leaders a voice in decisions.</p> <p>Transparent communication – e.g. publishing criteria, deadlines, and fund expenditures – will build trust that the funding distribution is truly equitable and needs-based.</p>	Email		Alaska Municipal League	The comment is noted and will inform substantial amendment(s) to this plan.

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
55	9/22	<p>In closing, the Alaska Municipal League is committed to supporting a successful recovery from Typhoon Merbok. We recognize the tremendous effort that has gone into the 2025 Draft Action Plan and the constraints posed by a limited CDBG-DR allocation. Our comments are offered in the spirit of constructive improvement and ensuring that the plan’s implementation will fully reflect the needs and priorities of the impacted communities. We believe that by focusing on housing, infrastructure resilience, mitigation, and capacity building – and by embedding equity and local leadership in each of these areas – Alaska can set a model for disaster recovery that is both effective and inclusive. The issues of equitable funding distribution, capacity constraints, and respect for local self-governance are not merely formal considerations; they will determine whether the recovery truly succeeds in making these communities whole and stronger than before.</p>	Email		Alaska Municipal League	Does not include a suggested revision to plan or process.

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
56	9/22	We thank the Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development (Division of Community and Regional Affairs) for the opportunity to provide input. We are encouraged by the plan’s acknowledgement of challenges such as overcrowded housing, subsistence impacts, and limited local capacity, and by its commitment to work with Tribal and local partners to overcome them. Moving forward, AML and its member municipalities, as well as Tribal governments, stand ready to collaborate and assist in the implementation of the Action Plan. We urge you to incorporate the recommendations above – from adjusting program allocations to enhancing technical assistance – to ensure the final Action Plan is as responsive as possible to those it aims to serve.	Email		Alaska Municipal League	Does not include a suggested revision to plan or process.
57	9/23	I am writing to provide comments on the Draft Typhoon Merbok Action Plan, which proposes a plan for distributing CDBG-DR funding for the unmet needs remaining in communities due to Typhoon Merbok. Kwethluk Alaska is located 12 air miles east of Bethel Alaska which is on the Kuskokwim River in the junction of the Kwethluk River. Kwethluk Alaska has a population of about 850 people which are primarily Yup'ik.	Email	Martin Andrew	Kwethluk Organized Village of Kwethluk	Does not include a suggested revision to plan or process.

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
58	9/23	<p>In the community of Kwethluk when they were facing Typhoon Merbok, a boat sank under water which caused damage to the boat and motor. Fish camps also were damaged such as roofing materials, side beams, walls, and some were fallen to the ground. Old homes that are still in use had some damage but not severe. Some materials were floating down river, such as metals, wood, and plastics. We had high water during the time but did not go over land, only to low lying areas. During Typhoon Merbok, homes were not severely damaged and just minor. As for erosion, we are facing moderate erosion every year when spring flood comes to the community of Kwethluk. We lose about 4 feet every year because of erosion. We the community of Kwethluk would like to get funding for erosion control so that we do not have to relocate in the future.</p>	Email	Martin Andrew	Kwethluk Organized Village of Kwethluk	<p>The impacts of Typhoon Merbok to Kwethluk are noted and will be included in the Unmet Disaster Recovery Needs Assessment that will inform Substantial Amendment #1.</p>
59	9/23	<p>We have learned about this comment opportunity from the Alaska Institute for Justice, we have just heard about this in the last minute. We hope that the DCRA will help give us this funding so that we can start repairing some homes and fish camps. We will focus on elevating homes and get materials that homes need.</p>	Email	Martin Andrew	Kwethluk Organized Village of Kwethluk	<p>Does not include a suggested revision to plan or process.</p>

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
60	9/23	<p>Quinhagak is a coastal village on the East side of the Kuskokwim Bay with a population of just under 900, located approximately 75 miles directly South of Bethel, AK. We are situated right along a coastal wetland and we are highly susceptible to flood ing during high winds during flood tides, which seem to be happening more frequently in the past 10 years ever since we started experiencing the first effects of climate change. We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the above-mentioned funding that is in the works to become available to families and communities that were devastated by Typhoon Merbok. However, we are certainly dismayed by the very short notice to gather comments from the tribal members, especially during the most important time for families to gather meat for the winter from September 1 thru October 15. We certainly would have been offering much more detailed comments had we were given more time.</p>	Email	Patrick Cleveland	Quinhagak Native Village of Kwinhagak	<p>The State of Alaska met HUD’s requirements for public engagement during the Public Review Draft period. Unfortunately, the timeline for this Action Plan did not allow for engagement efforts beyond the minimum requirements. However, additional opportunities for public input will be available when a Substantial Amendment is published, which will include a longer comment period.</p>

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
61	9/23	<p>The strong winds from Merbok did not hit our community with its full force, but there were still some damages that should not be disregarded. The coastline was hit hard by the wind and waves, causing coastline erosion made worse by permafrost degradation, increasing the threat of the erosion reaching the greywater lagoon and landfill. The wind destroyed some fish drying racks along the river, toppled smokehouses where the dried fish is cured for long term storage, and nets were lost or damaged beyond being useful again. It sank boats causing families to sacrifice their hard-earned money to make repairs, not to mention repairing damages. Our residents do not live in a cash economy, and these unplanned expenses caused that much more hardship in recovering back to their day to day living.</p>	Email	Patrick Cleveland	Quinhagak Native Village of Kwinhagak	<p>The impacts of Typhoon Merbok to Quinhagak are noted and will be included in the Unmet Disaster Recovery Needs Assessment that will inform Substantial Amendment #1.</p>

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
62	9/23	The majority of the houses in Quinhagak are aging. The high winds of Merbok blew away some residential house siding exposing the exterior insulation, it tore off sections of the thin roofing tin causing water to leak inside some homes, small windbreak porches were blown off and damage was sustained to the connected stairs. The electrical power lines are also aging, and some connections became damaged and loose causing power outages which were infrequent before the storm, resulting very likely in damaged transformers.	Email	Patrick Cleveland	Quinhagak Native Village of Kwinhagak	The impacts of Typhoon Merbok to Quinhagak are noted and will be included in the Unmet Disaster Recovery Needs Assessment that will inform Substantial Amendment #1.
63	9/23	Despite HUD's and the federal government's obligation to consult directly with tribes, I was surprised that I did not become aware of this possible funding until our grant writer emailed this information at the beginning of September. In light of the documented language barrier especially between our elders and the agencies, we really needed a longer comment period in order to really get the total understanding of everyone while translating some English terminology that we do not have in Yupik as our first language. While being the most to benefit from this fund, we were really put at a disadvantage by this short notice by not being afforded enough time to tailor it to help us to the maximum.	Email	Patrick Cleveland	Quinhagak Native Village of Kwinhagak	The State of Alaska met HUD's requirements for public engagement during the Public Review Draft period. Unfortunately, the timeline for this Action Plan did not allow for engagement efforts beyond the minimum requirements. However, additional opportunities for public input will be available when a Substantial Amendment is published, which will include a longer comment period.

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64	9/23	I want to invite you to communicate closely and directly with the communities effected by Typhoon Merbok, so that you can gain first-hand knowledge of the issues we could be addressing if we are awarded funds under this grant. I think this will make our partnership that much more meaningful and stronger when the grants are implemented. Thank you for taking my concerns, I will look forward to seeing comments from other nearby communities once the comment period is over.	Email	Patrick Cleveland	Quinhagak Native Village of Kwinhagak	The State of Alaska met HUD’s requirements for public engagement during the Public Review Draft period. Unfortunately, the timeline for this Action Plan did not allow for engagement efforts beyond the minimum requirements. However, additional opportunities for public input will be available through the outreach activities described in Section 3.2 Citizen Participation and when a Substantial Amendment is published, which will include a longer comment period.
65	9/24	Thank you for the opportunity to provide input and for your continued commitment to supporting disaster recovery efforts in Alaska. On behalf of the Rural Housing team at Rural Alaska Community Action Program, Inc. (RurAL CAP)—a HUD-recognized Community-Based Development Organization (CBDO)—we respectfully submit the following public comments regarding the proposed funding requirements for the Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) program related to the 2022 Typhoon Merbok FEMA Disaster #4672.	Email		Rural Alaska Community Action Program, Inc.	Does not include a suggested revision to plan or process.

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
66	9/24	<p>RurAL CAP has decades of experience in rural housing, including building, renovating, and weatherizing homes across numerous communities in rural Alaska. In early 2023, we were invited to join the FEMA Interagency Recovery Coordination (IRC) recovery group to assist communities in developing detailed estimates and scopes of work, an essential step for enabling funders to provide support. Since then, we have continued working with many communities impacted by Typhoon Merbok, including Kipnuk, Tuntutuliak, Napakiak, Bethel, Hooper Bay, Pilot Station, Kotlik, Stebbins, Toksook Bay, Chevak, St. Michael, Scammon Bay, and Nome. Currently, we are providing technical assistance and oversight for home renovations and new construction in eight affected communities.</p>	Email		Rural Alaska Community Action Program, Inc.	Does not include a suggested revision to plan or process.

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
67	9/24	<p>FEMA-Approved Hazard Mitigation Plans: Many of the communities we serve have never had a FEMA-approved Hazard Mitigation Plan, and those that did may now have outdated versions. Requiring a current plan creates an unnecessary barrier for rural communities with limited resources. We recommend allowing communities to develop a Hazard Mitigation Plan as part of the funding application and award process.</p>	Email		Rural Alaska Community Action Program, Inc.	<p>The Action Plan includes specificity about allowable planning activities in the Planning Program, which include Hazard Mitigation Plans for local jurisdictions within the HUD- and Grantee-identified Most Impacted and Distressed Areas, as well as a reimbursable support agreement with the State of Alaska Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHS&EM) for Hazard Mitigation Planning Review (Section 4.10).</p>
68	9/24	<p>Sewer and Water Infrastructure: Many Merbok-affected communities lack piped water and sewer systems, relying instead on sanitation practices such as pump-and-haul. Automatically disqualifying these communities due to infrastructure limitations poses a barrier for the most rural communities under this disaster declaration. Funding requirements should accommodate existing sanitation practices that align with standards set by the State of Alaska, Village Safe Water or the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC).</p>	Email		Rural Alaska Community Action Program, Inc.	<p>The Action Plan recognizes that many Merbok-affected communities rely on non-piped sanitation systems such as pump-and-haul (Section 2.4). Funding requirements for eligible activities are set by HUD and must align with federal guidance. The comment is noted, but no changes to the Action Plan are proposed at this time.</p>

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
69	9/24	<p>Multi-Family Housing Requirements: While multi-family housing may be cost-effective in some contexts, it is not practical in most rural Alaska communities and many of the potentials for cost savings are lost in small communities without heavy equipment to accommodate the construction of a large multi-unit structure. i. Permafrost conditions make large structures on pilings vulnerable to long-term damage. ii. Large buildings with multiple units are not common and neither is the capacity to properly manage and maintain large units, which could pose a barrier to almost all communities within the Typhoon Merbok disaster declaration. The construction of single-family homes that meet all the current HUD and Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC) requirements should be allowable under this funding. Flexibility is also needed to allow renovation of existing structures, which may be more practical and cost-effective in some communities.</p>	Email		Rural Alaska Community Action Program, Inc.	<p>Funding allocated to address unmet recovery need for housing in the Action Plan includes a Homeowner Recovery Program that can provide up to 77 eligible homeowners with up to \$200,000 toward for inspection and repair to homes damaged by Typhon Merbok (Section 4.10). The New Housing Construction Program includes new construction projects of 1-4 housing units (Section 4.10). All recipients of assistance funded by CDBG-DR funds must meet the CDBG-DR program requirements set by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).</p>

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
70	9/24	<p>Disaster recovery in rural Alaska requires recognition of the unique challenges posed by limited infrastructure, workforce constraints, and cultural preferences. We strongly encourage HUD to work closely with local leaders and partners to incorporate community input, ensuring that funding criteria supports locally driven solutions and reflect on-the-ground realities.</p> <p>Thank you again for the opportunity to comment. We urge HUD to revise the proposed funding requirements so that rural communities most impacted by Typhoon Merbok can fully benefit from these critical recovery resources.</p>	Email		Rural Alaska Community Action Program, Inc.	Does not include a suggested revision to plan or process.

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
71	9/24	<p>Alaska Institute for Justice (AIJ) submits these comments on the Draft Typhoon Merbok Action Plan (hereinafter “draft plan”), which proposes a plan for distributing CDBG-DR funding for the unmet needs remaining in impacted communities due to Typhoon Merbok. AIJ is a non-profit human rights law firm headquartered in Anchorage, Alaska. We currently work in collaboration with ten remote Alaska Native Tribal communities experiencing extreme impacts from climate change. Our comments are based on our understanding of the impact Typhoon Merbok had on these and nearby communities; as well as the realities and challenges of rural Alaska Tribal villages responding to these types of climate impacts, including more frequent and severe storms, extreme erosion, permafrost thaw, and flooding.</p>	Email	Sheryl Musgrove	Alaska Institute for Justice	Does not include a suggested revision to plan or process.

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72	9/24	<p>In September 2022, Typhoon Merbok devastated several coastal communities located in Western Alaska, bringing winds of up to 75 mph, high waves, and storm surge of up to 10 feet above mean sea level. Some residents lost everything in their subsistence camps. As one resident of Golovin explained, following the storm: “We lost everything and fishing season is approaching very fast, and we have nothing!!!! This is or was our way of subsisting for drying fish, collecting edible plants and berries. Not having a camp site for subsistence is a huge loss our food security for the winter. Please help us.” This event was devastating for the impacted communities. Yet, as the draft plan acknowledges, only a small percentage of households in the disaster area applied for Individual Assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The funds from this CDBG-DR grant are therefore critical to help fill the gaps that remain in disaster relief and response.</p>	Email	Sheryl Musgrove	Alaska Institute for Justice	Does not include a suggested revision to plan or process.

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
73	9/24	<p>In this letter we underscore the following important considerations: addressing gaps in the data; providing an explanation for and reconsidering HUD-identified MID Areas; rethinking or providing a more thorough explanation for the multifamily housing program; considering allocating funds for subsistence infrastructure; emphasizing the importance of funding hazard mitigation planning; improving community engagement methods; and enhancing language access resources. We appreciate the State of Alaska’s intentions to follow up with community visits to gather further input from affected communities and encourage the State to make cultural accommodations – including translation services – in engagement methods, in part by communicating with impacted communities early and often in order to make those visits successful.</p>	Email	Sheryl Musgrove	Alaska Institute for Justice	This comment is noted and will be addressed through the preparation of future substantial amendment(s).

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74	9/24	We also note our concern, described more fully below, that this comment period may not have been well publicized, and we therefore look forward to engaging, and helping our partner Tribes engage, in this process in the months to come prior to finalization of this plan. We also appreciate that the draft plan acknowledges that substantial amendments to the plan are possible.	Email	Sheryl Musgrove	Alaska Institute for Justice	The State of Alaska met HUD’s requirements for public engagement during the Public Review Draft period. Unfortunately, the timeline for this Action Plan did not allow for engagement efforts beyond the minimum requirements. However, additional opportunities for public input will be available when a Substantial Amendment is published, which will include a longer comment period.

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75	9/24	<p>The data gaps in the draft plan require careful and specific follow up with communities. The calculation of unmet needs from the disaster requires an accurate accounting of how much need existed pre-disaster, how much need arose from the disaster, and how much of that need has been met to date. This accounting therefore is highly dependent on data from agencies such as FEMA. The draft plan acknowledges that “[e]stimates of disaster impact are low vis-à-vis the population of MID3 areas partly because people did not apply for federal and state programs, and partly because not all relevant data are available at the time of writing.” For example, in Table 10 showing federal data, the Pribilof Islands REAA shows \$0 for unmet needs from Merbok, even though this figure is obviously incorrect. Even the state’s data on the Yupiit and Pribilof Islands REAAs on Table 11 shows \$0 in unmet needs, although this data must also be incorrect.</p>	Email	Sheryl Musgrove	Alaska Institute for Justice	<p>The State of Alaska met HUD’s requirements for public engagement during the Public Review Draft period. Unfortunately, the timeline for this Action Plan did not allow for engagement efforts beyond the minimum requirements. However, additional opportunities for public input will be available when a Substantial Amendment is published, which will include a longer comment period.</p>
76	9/24	<p>[Data Gaps] Moreover, although the draft plan explains briefly why the federal data is incomplete, the draft plan should provide an explanation for the data gap in the state data. We urge the State to better explain why this data is incomplete, and the agency’s plans to fill the gaps.</p>	Email	Sheryl Musgrove	Alaska Institute for Justice	<p>Data gaps will be filled, to the extent possible, through the preparation of Substantial Amendment #1.</p>

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
77	9/24	[Data Gaps] We have long been aware of this discrepancy between the agency data on Merbok’s impacts and the reality of people’s needs on the ground. We direct the agency to a comment letter we wrote to FEMA on the Individual Assistance program; the comment letter includes more in-depth information on the oversights and procedural issues with the FEMA IA program for the Merbok response. We also point to a letter we sent to the Alaska congressional delegation asking for an inquiry into FEMA’s process, which also has additional relevant information. We are attaching both of these documents for your review.	Email	Sheryl Musgrove	Alaska Institute for Justice	The comment is noted and will inform substantial amendment(s) to this plan.

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78	9/24	<p>We therefore find that the estimates of unmet housing needs stemming from Typhoon Merbok in Table 9 to be vast underestimates. Even though the draft plan acknowledges the inaccurate data from the FEMA IA program, it still relies on those data. The draft plan indicates on Table 23 that there was \$0 of unmet need for manufactured housing in almost all the REAAs, and \$0 in all REAAs for assisted housing, because the FEMA IA program met or exceeded the verified loss, and that “IA records indicate that all properties were referred to the SBA Home Disaster Recovery Loan Program.” We agree that the State will need to gather more information about the unmet recovery needs through community outreach. We therefore ask that the State seek information on this type of data in the communities because, as the draft plan itself acknowledged, many individuals were not successful in applying for IA, and we are aware that many more individuals simply gave up when referred to the SBA because of the barriers to that program.</p>	Email	Sheryl Musgrove	Alaska Institute for Justice	The comment is noted and will inform substantial amendment(s) to this plan.

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
79	9/24	[Data Gaps] The draft plan also includes a gap in the data for individuals left homeless by Merbok’s damages. As the draft plan acknowledges, the number of displaced or “homeless” individuals cannot be accurately calculated from point-in-time counts. Table 25 presents point-in-count data from the Homeless Management Information System which does not report disaggregated data for smaller communities in MID areas. Thus, it is not clear how shelter data for FEMA Declared, HUD MID, and HUD and State MID were calculated in this table.	Email	Sheryl Musgrove	Alaska Institute for Justice	Section 2.2.10. Point-in-Time Count – Type of Shelter was updated to include the following clarification: "Geographies within this query for which HMIS data was available include: Nome and Bethel. Data for small communities is available statewide but not by region." This data gap will be addressed to the extent possible during preparation of substantial amendment(s).

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
80	9/24	[Data Gaps] Additionally, the information requests sent to providers of homeless shelter and support services in impacted areas only reflects results from regional hub communities as a result of the unavailability of support facilities in rural communities. It is not clear whether these organizations provided homeless data from the rural communities as well. Furthermore, because many isolated communities do not possess these facilities or services and displaced individuals commonly stay with family rather than leave their communities to stay in a shelter, the data cannot support the true impact of disaster displacement as a result of Typhoon Merbok. We therefore urge the agency to conduct community outreach to each of the impacted communities to address this data gap for more complete calculations of affected individuals.	Email	Sheryl Musgrove	Alaska Institute for Justice	The comment is noted and will inform substantial amendment(s) to this plan.

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
81	9/24	<p>The process for HUD to identify MID Areas has likely missed heavily impacted communities. The areas slated to receive a lesser percentage of the funding were hit hard by Merbok, and the proposed allocation may not be accurate or equitable. The HUD-identified MID areas are the Bering Strait REAA, Kashunamiut REAA, and the Lower Yukon REAA, while the State- identified MID Areas are the Lower Kuskokwim REAA, Yupiit REAA, and Pribilof REAA. Yet the State-identified MID Area of the Lower Yukon is calculated as having the highest “Cost of Total Immediate Unmet Housing Need Pre-Disaster.” It is therefore unclear why the area with the highest pre-disaster need would not also be identified by HUD.</p>	Email	Sheryl Musgrove	Alaska Institute for Justice	<p>Section 1.2 updated to include the following: "Using FEMA and other federal data collected after the storm, HUD determined that Bering Strait REAA, Kashunamiut REAA, and Lower Yukon REAA had the highest need for recovery funding. These areas were designated as “HUD-Identified MID” areas and are eligible for at least 80% of the non-mitigation allocated funding. The State, as the HUD grantee, is permitted to add areas adversely impacted by the storm using local data and information; these are designated as “State-Identified MIDs” and are eligible for up to 20% of the non-mitigation allocated funding."</p>

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
82	9/24	<p>Furthermore, the rationale of why some areas are HUD-identified versus State-identified is not made clear, even though the differentiation is clearly significant because the HUD-identified areas will receive 80% of the funding, per federal regulation. This important distinction is not made clear in the draft plan, and an explanation is missing on how areas are identified as MID by HUD versus by the State of Alaska.</p>	Email	Sheryl Musgrove	Alaska Institute for Justice	<p>Section 2.1 updated to include the following: "When developing Disaster Recovery allocations for the Advance Award Notice, HUD designates Most Impacted and Distressed (MID) communities based on concentration of damages to and losses of housing, infrastructure, businesses, and other assets from a specific disaster using data from federal agencies like FEMA and SBA. After Typhoon Merbok, HUD used FEMA damage assessment data and determined that Bering Strait REAA, Kashunamiut REAA, and Lower Yukon REAA had the highest need for funds. State grantees can also identify additional communities under their jurisdiction that suffered damage from the federally declared disaster using quantifiable data and in collaboration with partners. CDBG-DR parameters require that at least 80% of the funds must be spent in the HUD-Identified MIDs and 20% may be spent in State-Identified MIDs. Grantees can formally request additions to the HUD-Identified MID areas using supporting data showing good cause. Factors that could qualify include showing that the suggested area had similar or worse impacts compared to the existing HUD list or that the new area has high concentrations of poverty, older housing stock, or fewer recovery resources."</p>

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
83	9/24	<p>The process for HUD to identify MID Areas appears to rely on FEMA data from the IA and SBA programs, which missed large numbers of individuals and households. Identifying MID Areas relies on a formula that includes data from the Individual and Households Program, the SBA program, and other data that are flawed for the Merbok disaster. According to the HUD Allocation notice for the Typhoon Merbok disaster: “Grantees are required to use 80 percent of all CDBG–DR funds to benefit the HUD identified MID areas If a grantee seeks to add other areas to the HUD-identified MID area, the grantee must contact its CPD Representative or CPD Specialist and submit the request with a data driven analysis that illustrates the basis for designating the additional area as most impacted and distressed as a result of the qualifying disaster.” The State therefore had the potential to add other REAAs into the HUD-Identified Areas, and it is not clear whether the State pursued this opportunity.</p>	Email	Sheryl Musgrove	Alaska Institute for Justice	<p>This comment is noted and will be addressed through the preparation of future substantial amendment(s). The State of Alaska will use the information gathered through planned public engagement (see Section 3.2, Citizen Participation) to evaluate, and if able to justify, request that HUD revise the MID to include State-identified MID area(s) within the HUD-identified MID area(s).</p>

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
84	9/24	It is a difficult task to compare communities that were all hit hard by Merbok, but we are aware of communities in the Lower Kuskokwim Area that suffered devastating impacts to housing infrastructure from this storm and have significant unmet needs stemming from this disaster. Yet these communities are not part of the HUD-Identified Areas and are therefore proposed to receive a smaller portion of possible funding.	Email	Sheryl Musgrove	Alaska Institute for Justice	This comment is noted and will be addressed through the preparation of future substantial amendment(s). The State of Alaska will use the information gathered through planned public engagement (see Section 3.2, Citizen Participation) to evaluate, and if able to justify, request that HUD revise the MID to include State-identified MID area(s) within the HUD-identified MID area(s).

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
85	9/24	<p>It appears likely that these communities were not identified by HUD as MID areas due to the difficulty of the disaster relief application processes. Other communities in other REAAs may be in a similar situation and are not recognized as HUD-Identified Areas in this draft plan. The State should more clearly explain reasons why REAAs were or were not recognized as a HUD-Identified Area for purposes of this funding, and if there is any process for a REAA or a community to be recognized as such. We urge the State to gather the data that FEMA did not, and to use that information to determine if any REAAs should in fact be identified by HUD in order to receive more funding.</p>	Email	Sheryl Musgrove	Alaska Institute for Justice	<p>This comment is noted and will be addressed through the preparation of future substantial amendment(s). The State of Alaska will use the information gathered through planned public engagement (see Section 3.2, Citizen Participation) to evaluate, and if able to justify, request that HUD revise the MID to include State-identified MID area(s) within the HUD-identified MID area(s).</p>

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
86	9/24	<p>The agency should consider the types of housing used in impacted communities. The draft plan’s focus on rebuilding by constructing multifamily housing appears misdirected and illogical. The housing needs are high in the impacted communities. It is reported that 43% of households are overcrowded or severely overcrowded in the Yukon-Kuskokwim region. But the draft plan introduces the Western Alaska Housing Recovery Program where funds allocated for this program will provide for the development of new, affordable multifamily housing units. It is not clear whether this program is intended only for urban areas, or whether it will be implemented in the rural communities as well.</p>	Email	Sheryl Musgrove	Alaska Institute for Justice	<p>Funding allocated to address unmet recovery need for housing in this Action Plan was revised to include a Homeowner Recovery Program that can provide up to 77 eligible homeowners with up to \$200,000 toward for inspection and repair to homes damaged by Tyhpon Merbok (Section 4.10). The New Housing Construction Program includes new construction projects of 1-4 housing units (Section 4.10). All recipients of assistance funded by CDBG-DR funds must meet the CDBG-DR program requirements set by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).</p>

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
87	9/24	<p>We understand that this program is an opportunity for non-profit housing developers to construct new multifamily housing to meet a portion of the pre-disaster unmet need and to give families whose homes were impacted by Typhoon Merbok DR-AK-4672 a place for temporary relocation while impacted homes are assessed for protect-in- place or relocation. However, the draft plan did not provide clear examples of successful multifamily housing units in rural Alaska Native villages, including for example, Chevak. We are therefore concerned that this program is not well designed for rural communities.</p>	Email	Sheryl Musgrove	Alaska Institute for Justice	<p>Funding allocated to address unmet recovery need for housing in this Action Plan was revised to include a Homeowner Recovery Program that can provide up to 77 eligible homeowners with up to \$200,000 toward for inspection and repair to homes damaged by Tyhpon Merbok (Section 4.10). The New Housing Construction Program includes new construction projects of 1-4 housing units (Section 4.10). All recipients of assistance funded by CDBG-DR funds must meet the CDBG-DR program requirements set by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).</p>

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
88	9/24	[The agency should consider the types of housing used in impacted communities.] We are also concerned that funding could be funneled away from rural communities. While the requirements specify that new housing projects must be located in MID areas, it is not clear how communities are prioritized within the MID areas. Due to high costs, limited transportation options, workforce shortages, and the short construction season, developers are likely to concentrate housing projects in regional hub communities such as Bethel and Nome. As a result, small and isolated villages in Western Alaska are at risk of remaining burdened with overcrowded and deteriorating housing, reinforcing long-standing patterns of underinvestment and inequality. We encourage the agency to seek out ways to ensure rural communities are not overlooked.	Email	Sheryl Musgrove	Alaska Institute for Justice	Planned citizen engagement activities (see Citizen Participation, Section 3.2) are designed to ensure smaller communities have a voice in setting priorities and will inform development of a substantial amendment.

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
89	9/24	[The agency should consider the types of housing used in impacted communities.] The agency should also consider whether funding could help cover devastating impacts to subsistence infrastructure. We are aware that the FEMA Individual Assistance (IA) Program did not specifically categorize subsistence in property damage data. The draft plan does not currently include fish camps or other housing used during the subsistence season. Fish camps are central to subsistence practices with their locations having been established based on intimate knowledge of fish behavior and migration.	Email	Sheryl Musgrove	Alaska Institute for Justice	The Action Plan notes that Typhoon Merbok damaged subsistence assets such as boats, fish camps, drying racks, and cabins, and acknowledges that these losses are not fully reflected in current monetary estimates (Section 2.5). The unmet needs assessment reflects the best currently available data, and the plan identifies data gaps to be addressed through citizen engagement activities, including surveys and regional meetings (Section 3.2). These efforts will inform the preparation of Substantial Amendment #1 in 2026, which may refine allocations to better capture and respond to subsistence impacts. The comment is noted, but no change to the Action Plan is proposed at this time.

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
90	9/24	<p>[The agency should consider the types of housing used in impacted communities.]Coupled with the high percentage of families living at or below the federal poverty level, the practice of subsistence is more than tradition, it is an essential part of life. People participating in subsistence activities therefore use their camps as indispensable seasonal housing, not as a recreational cabin or second home. The draft plan acknowledges Merbok’s devastation to critical subsistence infrastructure and tools stating: Personal property, including homes and boats needed for subsistence activities, suffered severe damage due to the storm. Fish camps, fish drying racks, cabins, and other subsistence equipment are critical for sustaining livelihoods and cultural traditions throughout rural Alaska.</p>	Email	Sheryl Musgrove	Alaska Institute for Justice	<p>The Action Plan notes that Typhoon Merbok damaged subsistence assets such as boats, fish camps, drying racks, and cabins, and acknowledges that these losses are not fully reflected in current monetary estimates (Section 2.5). The unmet needs assessment reflects the best currently available data, and the plan identifies data gaps to be addressed through citizen engagement activities, including surveys and regional meetings (Section 3.2). These efforts will inform the preparation of Substantial Amendment #1 in 2026, which may refine allocations to better capture and respond to subsistence impacts. The comment is noted, but no change to the Action Plan is proposed at this time.</p>

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
91	9/24	[The agency should consider the types of housing used in impacted communities.] Considering that private property insurance is widely unavailable or cost prohibitive, this underscores the need for addressing damaged or destroyed subsistence infrastructure, including the homes people live in while engaging in subsistence practices. We suggest that subsistence structures, including but not limited to fish and moose camps, be explicitly included in the allocation of CDBG-DR funding.	Email	Sheryl Musgrove	Alaska Institute for Justice	The comment is noted and will inform substantial amendment(s) to this plan.
92	9/24	The proposals to use funding to support HMPs and community administration appear appropriate. The proposed prioritization of funding to write or update Hazard Mitigation Plans in the communities would be a beneficial use of funds. After a lengthy consideration of the hazards the impacted areas face, the draft plan concludes that “flooding, erosion, permafrost degradation, land subsidence, and severe weather are the most frequent and highest risks present throughout the impacted areas,” and that “Alaska is unique in the U.S. because of how permafrost interacts with flooding and erosion to exacerbate the impacts of these hazards.”	Email	Sheryl Musgrove	Alaska Institute for Justice	Does not include a suggested revision to plan or process.

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
93	9/24	Based on what we have learned from the Tribes we work with, we agree with this assessment and agree that these impacts form a strong foundation for considering hazard mitigation for the impacted communities. The draft plan then recommends “that CDBG-DR planning funds be allocated to develop and/or update HMPs in the affected regions.” We agree that this is a high priority, and we urge the agency to communicate this proposal to the affected communities.	Email	Sheryl Musgrove	Alaska Institute for Justice	Does not include a suggested revision to plan or process.

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
94	9/24	<p>[The proposals to use funding to support HMPs and community administration appear appropriate.] The funding to support administration of the allocations should, as much as feasible, go directly to the communities. The draft plan states that some of the funding will go to the State of Alaska for planning, but that “the State may reallocate some or all of the planning allocation to fund eligible planning activities by or for MID communities.” We read this to mean that planning funding could be reallocated to the Tribal or local government to administer mitigation and other activities. This is a critical point and could help account for the administrative support that will come from the governmental bodies within the communities. We recommend directing as much of this funding as possible straight to the affected communities’ Tribes and Cities to develop or update their Hazard Mitigation Plans.</p>	Email	Sheryl Musgrove	Alaska Institute for Justice	<p>Administrative expenses (referred to as 'Activity Delivery Costs' by HUD) are not separated out from the Planning-Only activity. “Activity Delivery Costs (ADCs) Costs incurred by a grantee or subrecipient directly related to delivery of a specific planning-only activity . Examples included in CPD Notice 23-06, available at https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/OCHCO/documents/2023-06cpdn.pdf .”</p> <p>Under the Planning Program, the Action Plan includes specificity about allowable planning activities, which include development or update of Hazard Mitigation Plans for local jurisdictions (Tribes and Cities) within the HUD- and Grantee-identified Most Impacted and Distressed Areas (Section 4.10).</p>

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
95	9/24	Community outreach needs improvement for widespread diverse engagement. Public Comment Period The comment period for the draft plan was seemingly not well publicized, risking a lack of notice and a failure of due process. The draft plan stated: Access to the public review draft was posted on the project website and promoted through public and local channels via the Steering Committee’s input and in accordance with requirements outlined in the Federal Register. Notice was distributed among affected communities via email, social media, newspaper and radio advertisements, and through local and regional service organizations.	Email	Sheryl Musgrove	Alaska Institute for Justice	The State of Alaska met HUD’s requirements for public engagement during the Public Review Draft period. Unfortunately, the timeline for this Action Plan did not allow for engagement efforts beyond the minimum requirements. However, additional opportunities for public input will be available when a Substantial Amendment is published, which will include a longer comment period.

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
96	9/24	<p>[Community outreach needs improvement for widespread diverse engagement. Public Comment Period] However, many Tribal members from the ten communities we are partnered with were not aware of this grant or the opportunities for engagement. AIJ only learned about this important comment period from a partner at a federal agency. In the short time we had to research the draft plan and comment period, we were unable to find reference to this comment period on DCRA’s social media (although we did find a post on the Department of Commerce’s Facebook page), in traditional media, or other governmental sources other than on the State of Alaska’s Public Notices website, which is very unwieldy to navigate. Upon learning about the public comment period, AIJ immediately disseminated the information to our Tribal partners and other relevant organizations.</p>	Email	Sheryl Musgrove	Alaska Institute for Justice	<p>The State of Alaska met HUD’s requirements for public engagement during the Public Review Draft period. Unfortunately, the timeline for this Action Plan did not allow for engagement efforts beyond the minimum requirements. However, additional opportunities for public input will be available when a Substantial Amendment is published, which will include a longer comment period.</p>

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
97	9/24	[Community outreach needs improvement for widespread diverse engagement. Public Comment Period] Upon learning about the public comment period, AIJ immediately disseminated the information to our Tribal partners and other relevant organizations. Upon receipt, many of our Tribal partners expressed strong interest in submitting a comment and concern for the lack of time to formulate a complete response. We are concerned that this demonstrates that the State of Alaska’s methods of notification were not sufficient. We strongly recommend further specific discussion with each affected community on culturally appropriate engagement methods to ensure optimal results for the disbursement of these funds.	Email	Sheryl Musgrove	Alaska Institute for Justice	The State of Alaska met HUD’s requirements for public engagement during the Public Review Draft period. Unfortunately, the timeline for this Action Plan did not allow for engagement efforts beyond the minimum requirements. However, additional opportunities for public input will be available when a Substantial Amendment is published, which will include a longer comment period.

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
98	9/24	[Community outreach needs improvement for widespread diverse engagement] Community Site Visits: Starting in September 2025 through March 2026, the draft action plan proposes community site visits to address the gaps in engagement and gather input on unmet needs. While we do agree with this method, we wish to emphasize the need for cultural accommodations regarding timing and protocol of visits. September 1st – October 15th falls during a critical time for subsistence hunting animals like birds, moose and caribou, and gathering berries and other plants. Families are prioritizing gathering food for the winter and may not be available.	Email	Sheryl Musgrove	Alaska Institute for Justice	The comment is noted and will inform implementation of public engagement activities (see Section 3.2, Citizen Participation).

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
99	9/24	<p>[Community outreach needs improvement for widespread diverse engagement] Additionally, due to the unpredictability of weather in Western Alaska, the opportunity to hunt may present itself last minute, requiring community members to step away from other obligations with little or no notice. Community site visits should always respect Tribal needs and priorities by making the appropriate accommodations. We strongly advise against any method of engagement that curtails Tribal sovereignty. Thus, affected Tribal communities should not simply be informed of a community site visit, rather they should decide on the most convenient and appropriate time for a site visit to their community.</p>	Email	Sheryl Musgrove	Alaska Institute for Justice	<p>The comment is noted and will inform implementation of public engagement activities (see Section 3.2, Citizen Participation).</p>

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
100	9/24	<p>Language access must be provided at all stages of this planning process.</p> <p>The draft plan notes that many individuals in the disaster-impacted areas speak English with limited proficiency,³⁴ and that there is “a need for language-accessible recovery communications and services.”³⁵ Yet, the website for the draft plan indicates that the “CDBG-DR Language Access Plan” will “be published at a future date.”³⁶ As a result, the draft document, used to solicit input, has not been translated at a time that will provide for more meaningful input.</p>	Email	Sheryl Musgrove	Alaska Institute for Justice	<p>HUD does not currently require language translation. Recognizing the importance of language access to this CDBG-DR process, the State of Alaska plans for translators to be present at upcoming regional meetings (see Section 3.2, Citizen Participation).</p>

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
101	9/24	The current language access plan appears limited to translating the final document. This barrier excludes well respected Alaska Native elders and other valuable community members – approximately 2,064 individuals, or 5.5% of the population ³⁷ – from meaningful early involvement. Moreover, many of the affected communities use Alaska Native languages as their first and primary language. In those communities, many residents, particularly the elders but others as well, cannot fully and effectively understand and communicate in English and often communicate internally and during meetings in their Native languages.	Email	Sheryl Musgrove	Alaska Institute for Justice	HUD does not currently require language translation. Recognizing the importance of language access to this CDBG-DR process, the State of Alaska plans for translators to be present at upcoming regional meetings (see Section 3.2, Citizen Participation).
102	9/24	[Language access] We are aware that FEMA made missteps in its attempts to provide language services in the aftermath of the Merbok disaster, and we urge the State to avoid these errors. By waiting until the plan has already been drafted or finalized to conduct outreach, the process limits their ability to shape the plan at its inception, when their knowledge and guidance are essential to successful disaster recovery.	Email	Sheryl Musgrove	Alaska Institute for Justice	The State of Alaska met HUD’s requirements for public engagement during the Public Review Draft period. Unfortunately, the timeline for this Action Plan did not allow for engagement efforts beyond the minimum requirements. However, additional opportunities for public input will be available when a Substantial Amendment is published, which will include a longer comment period.

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
103	9/24	Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments on an important allocation of funds to communities impacted by Typhoon Merbok. The Tribes we partner with are facing the immense challenges of erosion, flooding, permafrost thaw, severe storms, and more, brought on by climate change. Funding to help address the housing damaged or destroyed by Merbok will help to maintain community resilience in the face of the changing climate. As we detailed in sections above, we urge the agency to address and explain data gaps.	Email	Sheryl Musgrove	Alaska Institute for Justice	Does not include a suggested revision to plan or process.
104	9/24	We are also concerned that the data gaps have led to inaccurate assumptions about the HUD-identified MID Areas, which has significant implications for the funding allocation.	Email	Sheryl Musgrove	Alaska Institute for Justice	This comment is noted and will be addressed through the preparation of future substantial amendment(s). The State of Alaska will use the information gathered through planned public engagement (see Section 3.2, Citizen Participation) to evaluate, and if able to justify, request that HUD revise the MID to include State-identified MID area(s) within the HUD-identified MID area(s).
105	9/24	The agency should also consider what types of housing will work best for impacted communities, in all seasons.	Email	Sheryl Musgrove	Alaska Institute for Justice	The comment is noted and will inform substantial amendment(s) to this plan.
106	9/24	We agree with proposals to use portions of the funding to help communities develop HMPs, and to support planning work within the communities.	Email	Sheryl Musgrove	Alaska Institute for Justice	Does not include a suggested revision to plan or process.
107	9/24	However, we note that the outreach, engagement, and language access could use significant improvement.	Email	Sheryl Musgrove	Alaska Institute for Justice	The comment is noted and will inform the Typhoon Merbok CDBG-DR Language Access Plan.

#	Date Received	Comment	Comment Source	Name	Community / Affiliation	Response
108	9/24	Finally, due to the short notice we received on this comment period, we reserve the right to provide further input, and assist our partners to provide further input, and we look forward to engaging with the State of Alaska on this important project.	Email	Sheryl Musgrove	Alaska Institute for Justice	Does not include a suggested revision to plan or process.