



Alaska National Parks News Release

May 7, 2009 5:00 p.m.

National Park Service Supports Eagle Flood Response Efforts

The water levels along the Yukon River in Eagle, Alaska have dropped since they rose again Wednesday evening, and the flood warning for the community has been cancelled. The National Park Service (NPS) incident management team comprised of employees from Eagle and Fairbanks continued with the cleanup of NPS facilities in Eagle, and began checking facilities in the preserve to determine the extent of damage. Today's priorities included flying to check on the status of residents along the river, distribute supplies and equipment, and assess the condition of public use cabins, historic structures, and other park resources downriver of Eagle. All of the preserve residents contacted were high and dry, and some park facilities may have escaped the river's wrath. Slaven's Roadhouse appears to be undamaged, but the Glenn Creek public use cabin may have sustained some structural damage. These assessments will be ongoing in the coming days.

The status and well-being of the Eagle-based employees continues to be the NPS's highest priority, and the NPS will continue to assist them and the state's emergency response efforts in the Eagle community. Two park employees have lost their homes, and are in temporary living situations. A cabin owned by another park employee sustained damage, and the seasonal employee living there has been displaced. National Park Service Administrative Center employees in Fairbanks are organizing donations of supplies that will be brought into Eagle during the next few days.

The smell of fuel permeates the community of Eagle, as many tanks have spilled or were ruptured by the ice. A state emergency command team is on site, and today they were accessing the hazardous materials situation. It was determined this afternoon that the community well has been contaminated with bacteria, and arrangements are being made to bring in additional potable water. The park office in Eagle has its own well, and the staff will send in samples to determine its status.

The NPS incident management team will demobilize at the end of the day on Friday, but the Fairbanks Administrative Center will continue to provide extra staff and other assistance to the Eagle operation for the foreseeable future. The Alaska Fire Service helicopter that has been utilized for rescue efforts and hauling supplies and equipment since the flood event began late Sunday is being released at the end of today.

The Red Cross is taking donations for flood relief in Eagle and other locations. Donations can be made to the Fairbanks office, 725 26th Avenue or by calling (907) 456-5937.