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FLORIDA EMERGENCY MANAGERS DEPLOY TO ALASKA TO ASSIST SURVIVORS OF 2013 SPRING FLOODING

TALLAHASSEE — The Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM) responded to a request from the Alaska Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management for assistance with their response to the spring flooding affecting residents along the Yukon River. Alaska received a Presidential Disaster Declaration on June 25 providing individual and public assistance to the affected boroughs.

All fifty states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands have enacted legislation to become partners in the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) which allows assistance across state lines. Using the EMAC program, Florida provided assistance to Alaska by means of personnel that could assist with organizing volunteers and donations as well as communication.

Monday, July 1 the Florida Division of Emergency Management deployed External Affairs Director, Julie Roberts, and Public Information Specialist, Margaret Sanders to Anchorage to work with the Alaska communication team. Emergency officials across Florida stand ready to lend knowledge and expertise to assist fellow emergency managers in Alaska if additional needs arise.

“After any disaster, it is important to lend a hand to support our neighbors,” said Bryan W. Koon, Director of the Florida Division of Emergency Management. “Florida’s emergency officials are grateful for the opportunity to assist survivors as well as hone response and recovery skills to better serve Floridians in future disasters.”

Alaska suffered unusual flooding along the Yukon River in May and June after a longer than normal winter and rapid increase in temperatures. A river ice jam occurred near the community of Galena which caused flooding and significant damage by large sheets of ice. Communities impacted by the flooding are in expedited recovery. Transportation into the community of Galena, one of hardest hit, is limited to air and barge traffic. Federal and state partners are working together to provide resources to individuals, businesses, and the local governments.

Floridians are encouraged to assist the survivors of the spring floods in Alaska by donating through established relief organizations. Cash donations will be used to replace basic household items, specific items needed for winter, and food used to sustain families through the long winters. If you have goods to donate, be sure to confirm the need through a relief organization before donating.

“Donations of cash allow for versatility to meet the needs of survivors after a disaster,” said Volunteer Florida CEO Chester Spellman. “Floridians should work through established relief organizations to lend a hand in times of need.”
During Hurricane Season, Floridians are also reminded that the need for help can be closer to home. Working through established relief organizations such as the Red Cross to be trained to respond after a disaster is a good way to support your community before, during and after an emergency.

Information on how to support the victims of the Alaska 2013 spring floods can be found at Ready.Alaska.Gov. Updates on the recovery can be found on Facebook.com/ReadyAlaska or Twitter @AlaskaDHSEM.

For more information about emergency response in Florida, the 2013 Hurricane Season, and how you can Get A Plan! visit FloridaDisaster.org. Follow FDEM on Twitter at @FLSERT, on Facebook at Facebook.com/FloridaSERT and Facebook.com/KidsGetAPlan.

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