



KETCHIKAN GATEWAY BOROUGH
CITY OF KETCHIKAN



Joint Media Release: Third Avenue Landslide Update 18

Date: September 2, 2024, 6:30 p.m.
Contact: Kacie Paxton, Public Information Officer, 907-228-2383

For Immediate Release

Tourism Transit Planning Meeting Scheduled

A Tourism Transit Planning meeting has been scheduled for 5:00 pm on Tuesday, September 3 at the Ted Ferry Civic Center. The meeting will be hosted by the Planning Section of the Ketchikan EOC. All tour operators will be in attendance. This is an effort to reduce congestion on Tongass Avenue in anticipation of the return to school on September 3rd. AkDoT&PF will be assisting with traffic control.

Tour operators have made significant progress in reducing the impact of buses on Tongass Avenue:

- Many are ensuring their buses are at least 90% full before releasing them on the road.
- Ward Cove and others are already staggering their bus movements to ensure they are entering the roadways with spacing between bus departures.
- Many have adjusted schedules to avoid congestion.
- Many have made changes to operations to combine multiple vendor tours in order to make the transport vans more full.
- Some have canceled and culled some of their tours to alleviate congestion.

Rainbird Trail remains CLOSED. Hikers are still accessing the Rainbird Trail. All sections of the trail have been closed since August 25, 2024. Entering the Rainbird Trail is prohibited. People's unauthorized presence on the trail or the ridge causes the shutdown of clean-up and stabilization efforts and diverts the efforts of the workers and emergency responders. Please respect this closure and do not attempt to access the trail.

Recovery Work: Substantial progress was made today with debris and drainage. There were four excavators and nine dump trucks working to remove debris from the site. Danger trees were removed from above Second Ave. Crews opened up the storm drains on White Cliff Ave and on West Third, which allowed the pumps to be turned off. A drain on Third Ave Bypass remains covered, with water being routed to the next drainage area. Landslide Technologies (consultant) will be on scene September 3 to assist with development of a long-term plan.

The AkDoT&PF geologist team marked hazard trees above Third Ave Bypass, and reviewed the waste site above Copper Ridge.

The NOAA/NWS meteorologist team de-mobilized from Ketchikan today. Citizens are reminded to check for daily weather updates at <https://www.weather.gov/ajk/>

The DGGS geologist de-mobilized from Ketchikan today. He will be reviewing liDAR imaging and data collected on his site assessments. A final report will be provided in upcoming months.

KPU Electric crews replaced a Whitecliff power pole with minimal power outage to the neighborhood. The crew prepared to start the pole replacement for Second Ave North, which will be completed this week.

Upcoming Meetings & Events

Wednesday, September 4, 2024: A National Crisis Response Canine team – Tia and Bear, and handlers Terry and Eleanor – will be available to provide comfort to community members affected by the landslide. Call 907-228-2383 to request a visit with Tia and Bear.

Closures:

- The City Library will be closed on Tuesday, September 3rd.
- Borough offices will reopen on Tuesday, September 3, 2024 with modified hours of operation 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Evacuation Area: The evacuation order remains in effect for homes on Second Avenue from 2122 Second Avenue to Whitecliff Avenue. Return to these areas will be authorized after slide debris is cleared and power poles are replaced.

Road Closures and Openings:

- Whitecliff Ave has been opened from Tongass Ave to the first entrance of the White Cliff Building parking lot.
- First Ave is now fully open.

The following road closures are in effect:

- Second Ave from Austin St to Whitecliff Ave
- Third Ave from the Library to Washington Street. This area is expected to be closed for an extended period as debris is cleared and the area is assessed by engineers for structural integrity.

Services for Evacuees and Displaced Families: Services remain available and have moved to the National Guard Armory. Please call 907-228-2383 to request overnight assistance.

Anyone who had disaster-related expenses to their primary residence because of the event on August 25, 2024, is encouraged to complete the Individual Assistance application. The application can be accessed via <https://ready.alaska.gov/Recovery/IA>.

Red Cross representatives are on site and are working with homeowners directly affected by the landslide.

Call 907-228-2383 for help with applying for available assistance programs.

EOC Objectives

The Ketchikan Emergency Operations Center Unified Command is operating under the following seven objectives:

1. Develop and implement transportation plan by close of business on Sunday, September 1st
2. Complete slope stabilization (up and down) along 3rd Avenue by September 13th
3. Support safe opening of Ketchikan schools by September 3rd
4. Clear drains and control flow of water on 2nd Avenue
5. Restore services on North Second Avenue by September 10th
6. Provide assistance to displaced residents (ongoing)
7. Ensure the financial stability of the City of Ketchikan while managing the costs associated with the landslide response and recovery (ongoing)

Information and Disaster-Related Resources: Additional information about the August 25, 2024, Third Avenue Landslide is available at <https://www.kgbak.us/1098/3rd-Avenue-Bypass-Landslide>

To sign up for Nixle emergency alerts text "99901" to 888777 for updates.

Geological team photos to follow.

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Contractors, Geologists, and Public Works crew meet daily at 0700 to prepare for the day and at 1700 to plan for the next operational period. Photo credit to City of Ketchikan. Photo credit to City of Ketchikan.

G4 PTZ White Cliff Building



Four excavators and nine dump trucks were on site to remove trees and debris from the Second Ave area. Photo courtesy of the KPU webcam.



Seccon Construction completing the access road to the debris field. Photo courtesy of ASDF.



KPU Electric crew replaced a downed electric pole on Second Avenue. Pictured are Nick Kufner, Line Foreman, Donald Munhoven, Service Foreman, and Jerome “Jay” Simmer, Lineman, and Juan “Carlos” Orta, Lineman Apprentice. Photo courtesy of KPU Electric.



Nicole Ferrin, NWS Meteorologist, monitors the weather station on Third Avenue Bypass. Photo courtesy of DGGs.