

OREGON DEPARTMENT OF GEOLOGY AND MINERAL INDUSTRIES

Vicki S. McConnell, State Geologist



NEWS RELEASE: December 19, 2012

Increased potential for landslides and debris flows in northwestern Oregon

A Flood Watch has been issued by the National Weather Service from Wednesday night through Thursday evening for northwest Oregon and southwest Washington.

The official statement from the NWS can be found at:

<http://alerts.weather.gov/cap/or.php?x=1>

FLOOD WATCH FOR RIVERS IN NORTHWEST OREGON AND SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON DRAINING THE COAST RANGE AND WILLAPA HILLS WEDNESDAY NIGHT THROUGH THURSDAY NIGHT.

The target area includes:

- Central Coast Range of Western Oregon
- Central Oregon Coast
- Central Willamette Valley
- Coast Range of Northwest Oregon
- Greater Portland Metro Area
- North Oregon Coast
- South Willamette Valley

YOU SHOULD MONITOR LATER FORECASTS AND BE ALERT FOR POSSIBLE FLOOD WARNINGS. THOSE LIVING IN AREAS PRONE TO FLOODING SHOULD BE PREPARED TO TAKE ACTION SHOULD FLOODING DEVELOP.

Care should be taken when traveling over the mountains during this time. The most dangerous places include:

- Canyon bottoms, stream channels, and areas of rock and soil accumulation at the outlets of canyons;
- Bases of steep hillsides;
- Road cuts or other areas where slopes of hills have been excavated or over steepened;
- Places where slides or debris flows have occurred in the past.

Debris flows are rapidly moving landslides that can destroy everything in their paths. They can easily travel a mile or more, depending on the terrain. They will contain boulders and logs and transport those in a fast-moving soil and water slurry.

Some areas are more hazardous than others when the danger of landslides is high. If there is a flood warning, stay away from the river. Stay away from steep slopes during intense rainstorms. Knowing ahead of time where the danger areas around your home for potential landslides might be is the first step in being prepared.

DOGAMI's mission is to provide earth science information and regulation to make Oregon safe and prosperous.

Media contact:
Carol DuVernois

carol.duvernois@state.or.us

800 NE Oregon St., #28,
Ste. 965

Portland, OR 97232

Phone: (971) 673-1555

Fax: (971) 673-1562

www.OregonGeology.org

Mineral Land Regulation and Reclamation Program

229 Broadalbin St. SW

Albany, OR 97321

Phone: (541) 967-2039

Fax: (541) 967-2075

info@mlrr.oregongeology.com

Gary W. Lynch,
Assistant Director

Coastal Field Office

313 SW 2nd, Ste. D

Newport, OR 97365

Phone: (541) 574-6642

Fax: (541) 265-5241

Jonathan C. Allan,

Coastal Team Leader

Eastern Oregon Field Office

Baker County Courthouse

1995 3rd St., Ste. 130

Baker City, OR 978149

Phone: (541) 523-3133

Fax: (541) 523-5992

Jason D. McClaghry,
Regional Geologist

Nature of the Northwest Information Center

800 NE Oregon St., Ste. 965

Portland, Oregon 97232

(971) 673-2331

Email: info@naturenw.org

Web: www.NatureNW.org

Donald J. Haines, Manager

OREGON DEPARTMENT OF GEOLOGY AND MINERAL INDUSTRIES

Follow these steps:

- Stay alert. Listen to the radio, TV, or a weather radio for flood watches, which include the potential for debris flows and if told to evacuate, do so immediately;
- Listen for unusual sounds that might indicate moving debris, such as trees cracking or boulders knocking together. A trickle of falling mud or debris may precede larger landslides;
- If you think there is danger of a landslide, leave immediately;
- If water in a river or stream suddenly turns muddy or the amount of water flowing suddenly decreases or increases, this is a warning that the flow has been affected upstream. You should immediately leave the area because a debris flow may soon be coming downstream;
- Assume highways are not safe. Be alert when driving, especially at night. Don't overdrive your headlights. Embankments along roadsides may fail, sending rock and debris onto the road;
- Landowners and road managers should check road drainage systems and conduct needed maintenance in case the predicted heavy precipitation does occur.

Cleaning up after landslides can also be hazardous. "When it is wet outside, be careful when cleaning up the mess. A small mudslide can actually be part of a larger landslide. Cleanup should not be done until after the storm.

Contact Information:

Oregon Department of Geology
Bill Burns, Engineering Geologist
(971) 673-1538
bill.burns@state.or.us

National Weather Service – Portland
Tyree Wilde, Warning Coordination Meteorologist
(503) 326-2340 x223
Tyree.wilde@noaa.gov

DOGAMI's mission is to provide earth science information and regulation to make Oregon safe and prosperous.

Media contact:

Carol DuVernois

carol.duvernois@state.or.us
800 NE Oregon St., #28,
Ste. 965
Portland, OR 97232
Phone: (971) 673-1555
Fax: (971) 673-1562
www.OregonGeology.org

Mineral Land Regulation and Reclamation Program

229 Broadalbin St. SW
Albany, OR 97321
Phone: (541) 967-2039
Fax: (541) 967-2075
info@mlrr.oregongeology.com
Gary W. Lynch,
Assistant Director

Coastal Field Office

313 SW 2nd, Ste. D
Newport, OR 97365
Phone: (541) 574-6642
Fax: (541) 265-5241
Jonathan C. Allan,
Coastal Team Leader

Eastern Oregon Field Office

Baker County Courthouse
1995 3rd St., Ste. 130
Baker City, OR 978149
Phone: (541) 523-3133
Fax: (541) 523-5992
Jason D. McClaughry,
Regional Geologist

Nature of the Northwest Information Center

800 NE Oregon St., Ste. 965
Portland, Oregon 97232
(971) 673-2331
Email: info@naturenw.org
Web: www.NatureNW.org
Donald J. Haines, Manager