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By Public Information Officer Jeremy Zidek

SOA Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management

Media Contact: Jeremy Zidek, (907) 441-2337

Assessment team visits Perryville, Chignik Lagoon, and Chignik Bay after 8.2 earthquake

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska — The State of Alaska deployed an interagency damage assessment team of borough and state officials to the Alaska Peninsula yesterday following the magnitude 8.2 earthquake that occurred July 28.

The damage assessment team visited Perryville, Chignik Lagoon, and Chignik Bay to assess the impacts of quake and to meet with local officials.

Residents and local officials in the communities were relieved no injuries occurred and that damages from the earthquake were minimal. The damage assessment team observed a few cracks in drywall, some small cracks in the ground, and slight shifting of homes. All buildings and homes were in usable condition, and no damage to water and power generation or distribution were identified.

A frequent theme that was discussed during the assessment was the tsunami warning system, evacuation protocols, and evacuation shelters. The Division will work closely with the Lake and Peninsula Borough and local leaders to address areas of improvement in the event of future disasters.

In each community, residents evacuated low-lying areas after receiving orders from local officials, or decided to head to higher ground based on the violent nature of the shaking and the inherent tsunami risk in the area.

“I’d like to thank local and tribal leaders throughout the region for their calm, effective response to the earthquake and tsunami warning,” said Bryan Fisher, Director of the Division. “We all feel fortunate that the earthquake was deep enough and far enough that no significant damage occurred.”

In addition to the magnitude 8.2 2021 Chignik earthquake, the region has felt two additional powerful earthquakes in the last 12 months. On July 22, 2020, a 7.9 magnitude earthquake occurred, and on Oct 19, 2020, a magnitude 7.6 occurred. The 2021 Chignik earthquake is the largest earthquake in the United States since the 1965 Rat Island Earthquake and ranks as one of the most powerful earthquakes worldwide in the last five years.

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