

Governor declares disaster area

JUNEAU—Alaska Gov. Jay S. Hammond announced a disaster emergency in the state's west coast region stretching from Dillingham to Port Heiden, including the Lake Illiamna area, as a result of a severe storm last month.

Hammond, in signing the Declaration of Disaster Emergency, said he decided the Aug. 17 storm, which generated high winds and heavy seawaves coupled with high tides, did sufficiently severe damage to warrant a disaster declaration.

The governor said, following the receipt of inspection reports from the cities and villages in the region, that he decided the resources of the local governments were inadequate to recover from the effects of the intense storm.

Under the disaster declaration, the Division of Emergency Services is authorized to allocate from available funds, money necessary for disaster assistance and disaster management expenses. The director of the division may also call on other state departments and agencies to provide assistance to cope with the effects of the disaster.

The declaration is also the first qualifying step toward obtaining federal disaster assistance for the region.

Hammond, in signing the declaration, directed his staff to identify sources of state funding to aid local governments and individuals affected in the area to coordinate aid activities.

Extensive damage was reported from the storm, the remains of a typhoon in the Pacific Ocean, when it washed ashore in the Bristol Bay area.