Public Information and Warning Plan

Emergency Management Plan Annex

February 2022

Prepared by Integrated Solutions Consulting

Table of Contents

Table of Contents 2
Section 1. Introduction 3
1.1. Purpose 3
1.2. Scope 3
1.3. Authority 3
1.4. Situation Overview 3
1.5. Planning Assumptions 4
Section 2. Concept of Operations 4
2.1. Response Goals and Objectives 4
2.2. Activities Across the Emergency Management Spectrum 5
Preparedness Activities 5
Mitigation Activities 5
Response Activities 5
Recovery Activities 5
2.3. Responsibilities 6
Section 3. Direction, Control, and Coordination 7
3.1. Direction and Control 7
3.2. Coordination 7
King County 7
Neighboring Jurisdictions 8
State of Washington 8
Federal Government 8
Section 4. Plan Development and Maintenance 9
4.1. After-Action Reporting 9
4.2. Training and Exercises 9
4.3. Review and Revision Process 9
Appendix A. Communications Policy 10
Appendix B. Alert and Warning through AlertSense 11

Section 1. Introduction

The Public Information and Warning Plan serves as an Annex to the Snoqualmie Tribe Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP). The CEMP establishes the structure for organized and effective operations to prepare for, protect against, mitigate, respond to, and recover from an emergency affecting the Snoqualmie Tribe, its tribal assets and business interests, and tribal membership.

1.1. Purpose

The purpose of the Public Information and Warning Annex is to guide the coordination of public information for the Snoqualmie Tribe and to support the public information needs of tribal community members, employees, Snoqualmie Tribe leadership, and neighboring jurisdictions during a major emergency or disaster. Accurate, timely, and relevant public information and warning protects lives, property, assets, and cultural resources of the tribal community.

1.2. Scope

Snoqualmie Tribe members, employees, and visitors look to the Snoqualmie Tribe to provide timely information about hazards, threats to public safety, and risk reduction strategies. The Snoqualmie Tribe Emergency Operations Center (ST-EOC) relies on public information and warning strategies to communicate information in a variety of means and formats.

This Annex may be activated for major disasters and emergencies that impact the Snoqualmie Tribe and/or its neighboring communities and the greater Puget Sound region. Procedures for routine incidents and emergencies are covered within a respective tribal department, agency, or partner's normal operating plans, policies, and procedures.

Staff members serving in a public information and warning role within Snoqualmie Tribe can use this Annex as a guide to:

- Use and allocate public information assets to support emergency response.
- Distribute information about response and recovery to affected groups.
- Collaborate efficiently with local, state, and federal agencies and jurisdictions, mutual aid partners, and private organizations.

1.3. Authority

The Snoqualmie Tribal Council holds the sovereign authority to protect the health and welfare of the members of the Snoqualmie Tribe. These powers consist of, but are not limited to, notifying the public of an emergency or disaster affecting the tribal community. Final decisions about emergency response and the activation of this Annex are made through a collaboration between the Snoqualmie Tribal Council and tribal staff. The Snoqualmie Tribal Council has the authority to approve this plan as prepared by the Emergency Management Director or designee.

1.4. Situation Overview

Given the unique assets held by Snoqualmie Tribe, the dispersed nature of tribal members, and the location of the Snoqualmie Reservation, the Tribe commits to providing adequate information and warning about emergency events to members, employees, and visitors in coordination with other regional entities.

Disasters or emergency events may create a need for prompt, accurate, and reliable information. The Snoqualmie Tribe will rely on the website and other web applications, social media tools, direct communication with members, and warning applications such as AlertSense to distribute information. There are four distinct and overlapping groups that will require public information and warning from the Snoqualmie Tribe, including:

1. Tribal members
2. Employees of the Snoqualmie Tribe and its enterprises
3. Visitors to the Reservation (which includes the Snoqualmie Casino)
4. General public

Each of these groups will require unique messaging using specific tools and strategies.

1.5. Planning Assumptions

The Annex is based on the planning assumptions and considerations presented in this section, including:

- The Snoqualmie Tribe has a limited number of staff members with public information and communications expertise.
- Some incidents will occur with enough warning that appropriate notification will be achieved to ensure some level of preparation; other situations will occur with no advance warning.
- A proclaimed emergency will likely involve response from partners at the local, regional, state, or federal levels. Such an event will require significant information and resource sharing across tribal departments and agencies, as well as with neighboring jurisdictions and the State of Washington.
- A large portion of the community relies on social media for information on current events.
- During widespread power outages, Snoqualmie Tribe will use redundant means of communications.
- Rumors or misinformation can cause unnecessary distress. Rumors may promote inappropriate responses by the public or impede response and recovery efforts.

Section 2. Concept of Operations

Upon receiving warning of an emergency, threat, or disaster, Snoqualmie Tribal Council and staff will monitor the severity of the emergency and prepare to address the unique nature of the threat. The Concept of Operations section outlines public information and warning activities to prepare for, respond to, and recover from an emergency, as well as specific staff responsibilities to respond to the emergency.

2.1. Response Goals and Objectives

The immediate goals for public information and warning for an emergency or disaster include:

- Protect the health and safety of Snoqualmie Tribe members, staff, and visitors.
- Provide the best available information to the public to support personal and community preparedness and protective actions.
- Ensure the Snoqualmie Tribal Council and department leadership are informed of emergency response coordination and receive accurate incident information.
- Manage public information topics and trends to ensure accuracy and consistency.

These goals will be accomplished through the following response objectives:

- Distribute accurate, timely, and relevant information through a variety of platforms.
- Monitor and address rumors or other misinformation.
- Facilitate quick, appropriate, and transparent decision-making by Tribal Council and department leadership.
- Leverage resources through partnerships with neighboring jurisdictions and the State of Washington.

2.2. Activities Across the Emergency Management Spectrum

The sections below provide an initial list of activities and tasks within each mission area of emergency management most relevant to this Annex, including Preparedness, Mitigation, Response, and Recovery. This is not an all-inclusive list but rather summarizes the key activities that should be a part of an emergency public information and warning strategy.

Preparedness Activities

- Reviewing disaster communications capabilities and upgrading procedures to accommodate changing technology.
- Encouraging and maintaining interagency cooperation and coordination of readiness planning.
- Conducting public information programs regarding education and awareness on disaster preparedness and personal survival.
- Reviewing and improving response capabilities by conducting trainings, drills, and exercises.

Mitigation Activities

- Conducting education and outreach necessary to foster loss reduction and preparedness programs.

Response Activities

- Providing critical, timely, and accurate information through diverse communications platforms, including emergency alert systems, radio, phone, media briefings, websites, and social media.
- Coordinating with King County, neighboring jurisdictions, and the State of Washington to distribute information about a threat, disaster, or emergency.

Recovery Activities

- Distributing information about Tribal, local, state, and federal assistance programs.
- Compiling and distributing information on impacted areas and available services.
- Providing information to help the community rebuild and recover in a manner that is consistent with existing standards, mitigation best practices, resources, and values.

2.3. Responsibilities

Below are positions that will uphold specific public information and warning responsibilities during an emergency or disaster.

Tribal Council	1. Serve as the official spokesperson for the Tribe. 2. Communicate directly with the general tribal membership. 3. Communicate directly with media representatives, including interviews or public statements as appropriate.

Executive Director of Government Affairs and Special Projects	1. Maintain effective communications and consistent messaging. 2. Oversee Communications department staff. 3. Provide regular updates to Tribal Council related to public messaging and inter-governmental coordination. 4. Draft speaking points for the Tribal Council. 5. Direct the Communications Manager in coordinating the approval of media advisories and press releases. 6. Direct the Communications Manager in coordinating the approval of social media posts. 7. Coordinate staff on use of any digital platforms to communicate with and share resources for tribal members, as directed by Tribal Council and the Public Safety Department. 8. Ensure that public information is available in alternate formats to reach all segments of the population.
Communications Manager	1. Coordinate press conferences, press releases, media appearances, or other public platforms as relevant. 2. Support the development of remarks for press and media. 3. Coordinate the timing of social media messaging. 4. Coordinate the release of information in media releases or briefings. 5. Ensure information shared on the website or through social media and other platforms is accurate.
General Manager	1. Oversee any communications directed to Snoqualmie Tribe staff. 2. Provide regular updates to Tribal Council related to internal messaging directed to staff members. 3. Notify staff of the need to suspend all regular communications, as directed by Tribal Council.
Public Safety	1. Review and update the Public Information and Warning Annex on an annual basis, in coordination with tribal departments. 2. Coordinate the use of AlertSense for alert and warning to employees. 3. Notify Tribal Council and the Council Direct Reports of an impending threat, emergency, or disaster that may require the development and distribution of public or staff communications. 4. Approve messaging and resources to be shared with tribal members or employees about an emergency or disaster. 5. Provide public information and education as it pertains to disaster preparedness, response, mitigation, and recovery.
Employees	1. Adhere to the expectations for professional and responsible communications as described in the Snoqualmie Tribe Communications Policy (**Appendix A**).

Section 3. Direction, Control, and Coordination

During an emergency or disaster event, decision-making responsibilities should mirror normal operations, with some exceptions, to facilitate effective and timely response operations. This section describes the responsibilities for direction and control during an event, as well as the roles of key coordinating partners.

3.1. Direction and Control

The Tribal Council is responsible for establishing objectives and policies for emergency management and providing general guidance for disaster response and recovery coordination. During disasters, those responsibilities may be carried out from the EOC.

There are several executive staff positions with alert and warning responsibilities that serve as Direct Reports to the Tribal Council – the General Manager, Chief of Police, and Executive Director of Governmental Affairs and Special Projects. Additionally, Tribal Council may appoint a Director of Emergency Management to coordinate the emergency management program. Each of these Council Direct Reports will lead distinct components of emergency public information and warning at the discretion of the Tribal Council.

- The Public Safety Department, led by the Chief of Police, holds the primary obligation for public information and warning.
- Other departments that will function as support agencies for this annex include the Communications and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) groups. Both staff groups fall under the supervision of the Executive Director of Governmental Affairs and Special Projects.
- The General Manager may support information and warning procedures specific to Snoqualmie Tribe staff members.

The CEMP Base Plan includes a graphic illustration of the Snoqualmie Tribe organizational structure, including Direct Reports and their subsequent departmental and programmatic responsibilities.

3.2. Coordination

The Snoqualmie Tribe will strive to respond to incidents and emergencies as independently as practicable. Coordination among and between tribal departments will constitute the primary method of response. In the case of a more significant disaster or emergency, Snoqualmie Tribe will coordinate with King County, neighboring jurisdictions, the State of Washington, and the U.S. Federal Government to support and facilitate public information and warning activities. During significant emergencies or disasters, the Tribe may coordinate with other public information officials through a Joint Information System (JIS) or collocate at a King County Joint Information Center (JIC) to ensure consistent messaging.

King County

King County is responsible for several key public information and warning technologies, resources, and services, including:

- **King County Emergency Operations Center (KC-EOC):** When an emergency is declared and the KC-EOC is activated, all messaging and public information will be coordinated through the JIC located at the KC-EOC. The JIC is the location from which information is gathered, processed, and disseminated. The Snoqualmie Tribe may decide to include a tribal representative within the King County JIC to coordinate messaging and share public information needs.
- **Emergency Alert System (EAS):** Broadest means to give an initial warning to the public. It will be used where time-sensitive, life-threatening situations may impact the public, and immediate action is needed for their safety.

- **ALERT King County:** A free, regional public information and notification service where community members can register for important safety information during an emergency.
- **King County Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC)**: Participates in the education of the public on hazardous materials risks in its jurisdictional footprint of King County except Seattle and the area covered by Puget Sound Regional Fire Authority.
- **Community Communication Network**: A partnership between Public Health-Seattle & King County, community-based organizations, and community leaders to ensure essential health-related information reaches vulnerable residents during emergencies.

Neighboring Jurisdictions

City governments have some resources to provide public information on preparedness strategies, as well as more localized emergency alert and warning platforms, including:

- **Community Emergency Response Team (CERT):** These teams are made up of volunteer community members trained in disaster preparedness and response to help their neighbors. The City of Snoqualmie manages a CERT program.
- **Snoqualmie Emergency Communications and Support Team (SECAST):** The City of Snoqualmie manages SECAST, which is made up of community volunteers trained in emergency communications.
- **AlertSeattle:** An emergency notification system used by the City of Seattle to communicate with city residents during emergencies via text message, email, voice message, or social media.

State of Washington

Public information and warning resources provided by the State of Washington may include:

- The Governor's Communications Director serves as the State Emergency Public Information Officer (EPIO), and under the direction of the Governor, may direct, coordinate, and supervise the release of all State emergency instructions and news releases pertaining to the State's disaster operations.
- In the absence of the Governor's Communications Director or Assistant, the Washington Emergency Management Department PIO may direct, coordinate, and supervise the incident-related public information functions in coordination with local jurisdiction.
- The State EPIO coordinates with local and federal agencies on the release of emergency information and instructions.

Federal Government

Public information and warning resources provided by the Federal Government may include:

- The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) through the National Response Plan (NRP) ensures that sufficient Federal assets are deployed to the field during a potential or actual Incident of National Significance to provide accurate, coordinated, and timely information to affected audiences, including governments, media, the private sector, and the local populace.
- According to the NRP, the DHS recognizes that it is the Tribe's responsibility to provide information to its members.

Section 4. Plan Development and Maintenance

This section includes standard guidance on how to keep this Annex updated and relevant through reporting, training, and exercise activities, as well as regular plan review and evaluation.

4.1. After-Action Reporting

After any activation of this Annex, the Public Safety Department will initiate an After-Action Report (AAR). This AAR may be a part of a larger evaluation of the CEMP, or as a stand-alone analysis, based on the scope of the incident. The AAR analyzes key incident-related information by capturing planning needs, staffing requirements, process refinement, equipment shortages, and training needs. The AAR will provide an overview of performance related to each exercise objective and associated core capabilities, while highlighting strengths and areas for improvement. The AAR will also include an Improvement Plan that outlines needs, provides a prioritization of needs, identifies resources required, assigns the corrective action, and monitors completion.

4.2. Training and Exercises

The Snoqualmie Tribe may use training and exercises to improve the Annex by implementing the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP).

Annual refresher trainings will occur concurrently throughout the plan revision cycle for all tribal staff with public information and warning responsibilities, as noted in Section 2.2. Refresher trainings provide opportunities for tribal staff to learn any changes to the Annex and understand clear expectations of their duties. Training may be conducted in coordination with annual training on the Snoqualmie Tribe CEMP.

Different portions of the Annex will be regularly tested during exercises conducted by the Tribe. As needed changes are noted, they will be incorporated, and revisions sent to the relevant departments and partners. In addition, after an emergency or disaster where sections of the Annex are activated, or problems otherwise identified, the Annex will be evaluated, and changes made as necessary.

4.3. Review and Revision Process

The Public Information and Warning Annex should be reviewed on an annual basis by the Public Safety Department. Comments can be submitted at any time to the Public Safety Department and will inform an annual review. The annual review process will consider plan adequacy, feasibility, and acceptability, as well as incorporating comments from users and considering any real-world activation of the plan.

Appendix A. Communications Policy

SNOQUALMIE INDIAN TRIBE COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

CATEGORY: Communications	EFFECTIVE DATE: 12-6-2018
DEPARTMENT: Administration	REVISION DATE: 12-6-2018
OFFICER: General Manager	TRIBAL COUNCIL APPROVAL DATE: 12-6-2018

1. PURPOSE

The information found within this policy is intended to clarify Snoqualmie Indian Tribe communication roles and responsibilities.

2. POLICY

The Snoqualmie Indian Tribe is committed to prompt, courteous, and responsive communications with internal and external audiences. The Tribal Council and employees have different roles and responsibilities for Tribe communications.

A. The Tribal Council is the official spokesperson for the Snoqualmie Indian Tribe. Only the Tribal Council communicates with or authorizes communications on behalf of the Tribe with:

1. The general membership of the Snoqualmie Indian Tribe; and

2. Media representatives.

B. Employees may conduct communications with individuals, audiences, and organizations not specifically reserved for the Tribal Council. Employees must communicate professionally and act responsibly within the delegated authority and responsibilities of their position and:

1. Provide prompt, courteous, and responsive communications with co-workers, Snoqualmie Indian Tribe Members, community members, vendors, non-elected government representatives, and others.
2. Use good judgement to ensure communications comply with confidentiality, non-disclosure, acceptable use, and other Snoqualmie Indian Tribe policies.
3. Not engage in unauthorized communications with the general membership of the Snoqualmie Indian Tribe, other governmental elected officials, and the media.
4. Ask for help, information, or clarification from management staff on sensitive matters or when it is not clear how to best communicate, respond, or proceed.

Appendix B. Alert and Warning through AlertSense

This appendix serves as a quick reference guide for AlertSense, which is the main alert and warning communications tool for Snoqualmie Tribe. This appendix was developed based on the current utilization of the tool but should be updated as the tribal administration expands its emergency management capability. Improved capabilities may include an expanded audience for notification and warning, or new tools developed for communication with Tribal members and visitors to the Reservation and its enterprises.

What is AlertSense?

AlertSense is a communication technology that provides emergency alerts and notifications through a cloud network. Each jurisdiction has its own unique notification system. The AlertSense for Snoqualmie Tribe is distinct from ALERT King County or AlertSeattle.

Who sends the alerts?

The Snoqualmie Tribal Council has designated the Public Safety Department as the Tribal alerting authority. The Public Safety Department has the authority to alert the public of emergency situations occurring in the Tribe's jurisdiction.

Who receives the alerts?

AlertSense is currently used to provide alert and notification to Snoqualmie Tribe employees. All employees are enrolled in AlertSense as an opt-in service. They will receive both a text message and email notification for any alert. The system is not set-up to notify visitors or tribal members at this time. In the future, Tribal Council may decide to enroll Snoqualmie Tribe in the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS) opt-out service to alert everyone within a certain geographic area.

When are the alerts sent?

The Public Safety Department will send an alert to employees when there is any threat or hazard that may pose a risk to employees traveling to or working at the Reservation and administrative campus. Threats or hazards may include:

- Inclement weather (snow storms or heavy accumulation, Flood Phase 2 or 3, etc.)
- Poor air quality days
- Major highway closures
- Other life safety threats (active shooter, bomb threats, etc.)

What information is included in the alerts?

The Public Safety Department is pre-approved to send alerts for the hazards listed above. Additional approval may be required from the Tribal Council for incidents that fall outside the pre-approved list. Pre-approved messaging includes language shared by Washington Department of Transportation or King County Roads. As an example, pre-approved language could include:

The King County Flood Warning Center has issued a Phase 3 flood alert for the Snoqualmie and Tolt rivers, with moderate flooding possible, including some road closures, following heavy rainfall. The Flood Warning Center opened at 12:45 a.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 12, to closely monitor rising river levels.

In addition to describing the threat or hazard, the Public Safety Department will include any relevant information about office closures for employees. As relevant, the alert message will also direct recipients to additional resources or information on the Snoqualmie Tribe website or social media pages.

How else is the alert shared?

After the Public Safety Department has issued an alert through AlertSense, the Communications Department will post the relevant information to social media pages.